

# THE REFORMED CHURCH REVIEW

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## I.

### AN APPRECIATION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

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Perhaps it would be well if, among the many special days appointed to be observed by our churches, place should be found for one which might be known as a Day of Appreciation. The object of it would be to call the attention of church-members to, and to teach them to form a just appreciation of, the great treasures which belong to them by inheritance. The great Creeds of the Christian Church—the Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian; the Te Deum; the Litany; the Christian Year; the Collects—these are some of the precious things which as Christian persons we have inherited; which it is quite possible for church-members to know little of, and to care little for; in regard to which there is much need of information, that they may know how they came into possession of these treasures, and be able to form a just appreciation of their value.

This thought has been suggested by the circumstances of our being asked to write an "appreciation" of the Heidelberg Catechism, of the origin of which the present year is the 350th anniversary. There are precious things, such as those we have

named, which belong to us as members of the Church universal; and there are inheritances which are peculiar to us as Protestants. The Heidelberg Catechism belongs to this latter class. It is, and has now been for more than three centuries and a half, the Confession of Faith of the Reformed Church. The circumstance that, after so long a time, it is still serving as a confession of faith and being used as a book of religious instruction, would seem to indicate no small degree of significance and value. It is not characteristic of things without value to last so long and wear so well. That the Heidelberg Catechism has lasted so long, and is at present so living a thing, is presumptive evidence of its being a precious object, the value of which needs to be adequately appreciated.

The very circumstance, however, which seems to demand a just appreciation of the Catechism, leads also to a certain depreciation of it. Just because it has lasted so long, it is easy to disparage and depreciate the Catechism; and, indeed, within recent years, there has been a considerable amount of such disparagement and depreciation of it, as a thing old and "out of date." It must be admitted that there is a measure of justification for this derogatory criticism. In a certain sense, the Heidelberg Catechism is not "up to date"; there are things in it which the lapse of time and the progress of theological science have rendered in a measure antiquated and obsolete. Certain doctrinal statements, once adequate and acceptable, are no longer satisfactory. It may be that the time is at hand for a new Confession of Faith, more truly expressive of what is actually believed by Christian people of to-day, and a new book of religious instruction, more perfectly adapted to the wants of the times.

Meanwhile, however, it is well to remember, and it properly belongs to our appreciation of the Catechism to consider, that, if there are things in it which are out of date, there are many more things in it which are not, never have been, and never can be, out of date. A curious matter is this, of things being up to date or out of date. It is not determined exclusively by

time. Things may be old and stale; things may be old and may yet be as fresh and new as the morning. It has been said that "if one were searching for a real synonym for the fresh rush of life in the world, he would find Shakespeare; if he were looking for an example of old, stale and unprofitable things, he would find it in some morning newspaper." It is significant that the thing in the Heidelberg Catechism which perhaps may be considered to be the most out of date, viz., the concluding clause of the answer to the eightieth Question, did not become so; it was out of date to begin with; it was obsolete in 1563; it was both out of place and out of date when, under peculiar circumstances, it was first added to the Catechism, to which it did not originally belong. On the other hand, the things most characteristic of the Catechism are of such a nature as to be equally up to date, whether in 1563 or 1913. Horace Bushnell once said of a certain newspaper that it was "not only behind the times, but behind all times." In like manner, there are things which are not only out of date, but out of all dates. And, on the other hand, there are things which are not only up to date, but up to every date. Things of this kind are not wanting, indeed there is a certain abundance of them, in the Heidelberg Catechism. There are things which can never, by any lapse of time, be rendered antiquated or obsolete. The answer to the first question is as true to-day as when it was first framed; it will be as true ten thousand years from now as it is to-day.

Of every great and lasting production, of every work of genius, whether in the realm of literature, of art, or of religion, the greatness will probably be found to consist in the presence in it of certain great principles, to which it has conformed, and of which it is, in its measure, an embodiment and expression. It is these that impart to it its excellence; it is these that invest it with its staying power. For, while times and fashions and views and opinions change, principles remain the same forever. It is quite possible to recognize in the Heidelberg Catechism certain principles whose presence in it has

evidently had much to do with imparting to it its characteristic significance and value, and its measure of perennial freshness.

The first principle we notice is that of what we may call the primacy of personality. This book is of a personal character. As a book of religious instruction, its questions are not only addressed to a person, but have a direct personal reference to the person addressed. It is said, "What is *thy* only comfort in life and in death?" It is said, "How art *thou* righteous before God?" The Catechism is personal, also, in the deeper and more comprehensive sense of being about a Person. It is a confession of faith; and the belief which as Christian persons we confess, is, above all, belief in a Person; a divine-human Person, living, suffering, dying, rising from the dead, ascending to heaven. If our belief is a belief in propositions, it is only in consequence of its being first a belief in a Person. The Apostles' Creed, instead of being added to the Catechism in the form of an appendix, is in the very midst of it, nay, is the center and heart of it all.

This personal character of the Catechism is a thing of more significance than might at first appear. It is, in its place and its degree, the expression of a great and vital principle; the principle, namely, of the priority, the primacy, of personality, as compared with everything impersonal. There are powers to which impersonality can never attain; it is destitute, for example, of all propagating force. An idea, a theory, a truth, a doctrine, can become a living power only so far as it incarnates itself in a human person and a human life. A movement can become a movement only when the truth for which it stands embodies and expresses itself in some powerful and influential personality. "Men," says Dr. Döllinger, "are more than doctrines. It is not a certain theory of grace that makes the Reformation; it is Luther, it is Calvin." What would the Revolutionary period of our national history be without the personality of George Washington? What would the history of our next great national crisis be without the personality of Abraham Lincoln?

There would seem to be a mysterious law, by which the highest gifts can be given and the noblest impulses imparted to men only by means of persons. Of personality, nothing can take the place; no thing; no mechanism or contrivance however perfect; no law, or institution, or constitution; no theory, or doctrine, or system of philosophy; no creed, no rite, no ceremony. It may be said that there is no good thing in the world but is directly traceable to some man or woman, in whom it originated, from whom it proceeded, by whom it was transmitted. The virtues we possess, whatsoever these may be, we derive not from any impersonal source. These things come not thus; virtues are not to be imparted by instruction; it is of their nature that they go only by contagion. Nobleness, generosity, courage—it is characteristic of such things as these that they are directly communicated from person to person. Life can come only from life; it is torch that kindles torch. Impersonalities are powerless, or at least of altogether subordinate rank. It is personality that sits on the throne, and accomplishes the results which they are incapable of effecting.

Religion is essentially a relation of person to person; it consists in the personal belief in, and the personal following of, a personal leader. Christianity has much to do with doctrines; the principle of which we are speaking involves no tendency to disparage or undervalue in any manner the great importance of these. But their place is entirely subordinate; important as doctrine is, it is not the essence of Christianity. It has much to do with creeds; but these, important as they are, are of inferior value; they are in themselves incapable of accomplishing the results at which religion aims; they are the expressions of a spiritual life already existing, rather than the producing cause of that life, a power which can be found only in personality.

God's greatest gifts to men have always been by means of personalities; His own supreme gift to mankind is itself none other than a Person. When "the fulness of the time" came, He

gave, not a system of philosophy, nor a code of laws, but His only-begotten and well-beloved Son. In giving Him, He gave us all: doctrines, theologies, philosophies, laws, institutions and constitutions without number, all follow in the wake of this one all-including gift. Above all, in giving Him, He gave us what belongs to the very idea of religion: One whom we may admire and love with all the admiration and love of which our hearts are capable; One whom we may follow, serve and obey with all the energy of which our wills are capable. And, when the time came for the great process to begin of winning men everywhere to the great God of righteousness and truth and love; when Jesus Christ ascended on high and "gave gifts to men," it is significant that it was persons that He gave; "and He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists and some, pastors and teachers." Always persons; neither at the beginning nor at any point of the process of imparting life to a dead world, may anything take the place of personality. There are great books, and great doctrines, and great creeds, and great theologies, but their significance is altogether derived and dependent; they are what they are entirely because of their relation to the Person of Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Such is the principle of the priority of personality. The Heidelberg Catechism is constructed in accordance with it, and is strong with the strength of it.

Closely akin to the one we have mentioned, another principle found in the Catechism is that of the superiority of the concrete to the abstract. It needs no argument to prove the superiority, in matters relating to the presentation of the truth, of the concrete. It is the concrete that arrests attention; that is vivid, striking, impressive. Archbishop Trench, in his instructive book on "Proverbs," points out the characteristic use which proverbs make of the principle of the priority of the concrete over the abstract. It is characteristic of the proverb that it is the striking utterance of some general truth; and it is made striking by being made concrete. To

say, "All men are mortal," is to utter a stale and wearisome truism. But compare with this the Arab proverb, "Death is a black camel which kneels at the door of every man's tent." How picturesque and striking this is; who, that has seen it, can forget that black camel? So much difference is there between the one way and the other of saying the same thing. Our Savior's teaching was for the most part on this principle; it was by parables. He gave us, for example, no abstract philosophical definition of repentance; the philosophical terms of such a definition would have lost or changed their meaning in the course of time. He gave us, instead, the parable of the Prodigal Son, whose perennial freshness "age cannot wither nor custom stale."

The difference between the abstract and the concrete was strikingly expressed, a few years ago, by a phrase which, originating in political life, came into extensive use. It was the significant phrase, "a condition, and not a theory"; i. e., a concrete, and not an abstract, thing; a fact, and not a thought; a situation to be dealt with, not by argument, but by action. It is one thing to be dealing with a theory; it is another to be dealing with a condition. Now, the Heidelberg Catechism, at the very beginning, and throughout, is evidently dealing with concrete conditions. The first question and answer show that; as it has not to do with impersonalities, so it has not to do with abstractions. It implies from beginning to end a certain gracious condition on the part of the one receiving instruction. It is implied that the catechumen stands in a certain gracious relation to God; that he is a child of God and an heir of salvation. The Catechism has been criticized for this assumption, as being contrary to the actual facts of the case and detrimental to the spirit of true religion. It may well be questioned, however, whether it is not in strictest accordance with the New Testament and the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Those who are supposed by means of the Catechism to be receiving instruction in religion, are just those who have been made disciples by being baptized into the name

of the Trinity, and who are now, in obedience to our Savior's directions, being taught to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded. They have been brought into a condition, first, that afterwards their character may be made to correspond with their condition. They have been made Christians, so to speak, that they may become Christians.

In this there is no contradiction. It is a truism to say that one must become in order to be; the deeper truth, which underlies the superficial truism, is, that one must be in order to become. Every living thing is, to begin with, that which it is its destiny ultimately to become; it is, from the start, in idea and possibility, what, by a gradual process of unfolding, it is eventually to become in actual realization and manifestation. One must be a man, in order to become a man. Every organism is complete at the beginning; its development is nothing else indeed than the expansion and evolution of that which previously existed. Nor is this a fanciful and figurative, an imaginary and unreal, way of speaking; it is the simple and truthful expression of the law of growth, which always takes place by unfolding from within, and not by addition from without.

Nothing is more characteristic of the New Testament than the manner in which it continually implies and affirms that Christian people are what they are commanded and expected to become. After the manner of the Savior, who declared to those who were still in the beginnings of their religious experience, that they were "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth," His Apostles habitually address as "saints" those at whose saintly character it would have been the easiest thing in the world to scoff with great appearance of reason. To them these beginning Christians were "the saints," the "sanctified in Christ Jesus," "the faithful." They were "children of God," "heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ"; they had been brought "out of darkness into marvellous light," and made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"; they were "a chosen generation, a royal

priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." This is lofty language, language which might well seem to be applicable to the end rather than to the beginning, to the time of attainment, and not to the period of endeavor. It is language which can be explained and justified only by the truth that the end is in the beginning, that Christian people are at the outset what they carry in themselves the power and the destiny of becoming, and that what may be said of them at the last may in some true sense be said of them at the first. The New Testament writers were men of vision; they were inspired to see realities in possibilities, the consummation in the beginning. And what they saw was not fiction but fact. To them the people they addressed were indeed saints. They were saints by calling, that they might become saints in character; they were "children of God" by adoption, that they might become such by obedience; they were "heirs" by right and privilege, that they might become such by the claiming and actual possession of their inheritance; they were "dead unto sin," that they might refuse to let sin reign over them. It was this conviction and belief that gave power to the commands and exhortations of the Apostles. The most effectual way of helping a man to become, is to see that he in some sense already is, and to deal with him as being what he ought to be. Rightly understood, the best way of inspiring a man with the desire and endeavor to become a saint, is, on the basis of proper authority to do so, to treat him as if in some sense he already were one. It was our Savior's way; it was the way of His Apostles; it is the way of the Heidelberg Catechism. It is characteristic of the Catechism that, assigning a secondary place to abstractions, it deals primarily and throughout with concrete conditions. A large part of its strength and excellence consists in the presence in it of the principle of which we have been speaking; in the fact that, from beginning to end, it takes for granted, as the New Testament does, the existence, on the part of the baptized youth who are being instructed, of a gracious condition in relation to God. It is on

this principle alone that educational religion, for which the Catechism stands, becomes possible. For, if it be asked whether it be possible to make Christians by education and training, it must be answered very positively that this is not possible except upon one assumption, namely, that of having Christians to begin with. This, however, is the very assumption which the Catechism, following the example of Jesus and His Apostles, makes.

Another principle which the Heidelberg Catechism illustrates in a very remarkable manner, and to which it owes no small portion of its peculiar excellence, is that of reserve. Perhaps, speaking as we have hitherto been doing, we ought to call it the principle of the priority of silence over speech. There is certainly a sense in which silence is to be exalted above speech; this is testified by the proverb which says, "Speech is of silver, but silence is of gold." In every great personality, or utterance, or action, there will be found something of silence and reserve. Strength, and power, and perfection go hand in hand with restraint and reserve; weakness, futility and failure are associated with the lack of them. One of our own poets has said:

"Of every noble work the silent part is best,  
Of all expression, that which cannot be expressed."

And the greatest of German poets has said:

"Vergebens werden ungebundene Geister  
Nach der Vollendung reiner Höhe streben;  
In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister,  
Und das Gesetz nur kann uns Freiheit geben."

Especially any work which has the power of enduring, which has lasted from generation to generation, will be found to have in it something of reserve. It will not be "ungebunden"; it will show signs of "Beschränkung"; it will be characterized by moderation and restraint; it will have the low tone. Edmund Burke said of himself that he "had chosen his ideas of liberty not too high, that they might last him through life."

Longfellow, in his *Journal*, speaks of "the subdued tone of the best artists, in song, as in painting."

Carlyle, in his "*Reminiscences*," speaking of his peasant father, for whose intellect he had such respect that, comparing it with that of Robert Burns, he hardly knew which to pronounce superior, makes a curious and striking remark concerning him; he says: "The thing he had nothing to do with, he did nothing with." Now, there are things which a Confession of Faith has "nothing to do with"; it is the part of wisdom for it to do nothing with them. It is not a solution of the riddle of the universe; it is not for the answering of all possible questions; it is not even a system of theology; it is a confession of faith. Nothing is more characteristic of the Heidelberg Catechism than its moderation and restraint, its reticence and reserve, in regard to matters concerning which it might conceivably have spoken positively, dogmatically and fully. In some respects its strength seems to lie in what it does not say, as much as in what it says. Certain questions, instead of answering, it leaves unanswered. This is true, especially, of the doctrine of the divine predestination. St. Augustine said of this doctrine that it was a very high and mysterious doctrine, capable of being understood only by a few persons. And Sir William Hamilton says that, if St. Augustine had pronounced it a doctrine which no one could understand, he would have spoken more truly, and might have saved the world whole libraries of acrimonious literature. The essential truth at which this doctrine evidently aims, the Heidelberg Catechism gives, in a concrete and practical form, in its teaching as regards God's sovereignty and providence, but the rest of it it leaves to philosophy and metaphysics, where, and not in a confession of faith, it properly belongs. It has nothing to say of a decree of election, much less of a decree of reprobation. It is not a philosophy, but a confession of faith; having nothing to do with these things, it does nothing with them.

*The reserve of the Catechism on the subject of the decrees*

is, as has often been pointed out, the more remarkable in view of the fact that the makers of it were themselves firm believers in Calvin's doctrine on this subject. It has sometimes been explained by supposing that, in this work, they were taken possession of, as it were, by a spirit broader than their own which led them to be silent when otherwise it would have been natural to speak, and otherwise also "made use of them as organs for reaching its own end." Why should this be thought a thing impossible or unnatural? It is, in fact, a well-known experience; there are instances and illustrations of it even in the literary world. The biographer of George Eliot says: "She told me that, in all that she considered her best writing, there was a 'not herself' which took possession of her, and that she felt her own personality to be merely the instrument through which this spirit, as it were, was acting." Both Thackeray and Dickens asserted that they were often absolutely surprised by the sayings and doings of their creations. A certain poet said that he valued his poems, not because they were his, but because they were not; he believed that they were given to him; they came by inspiration.

However these things may be, the fact remains that the Heidelberg Catechism, in regard to matters respecting which it might have been expected to have been outspoken, practises a remarkable reticence; and that the principle of reserve, thus embodied in it, is one of the causes of its excellence, its charm, and its enduring power.

There is another principle, the presence and influence of which in the Heidelberg Catechism are perhaps more pervasive and more characteristic than those of any of the others we have named. Having done so in the case of the others, we will make this also to consist in a "priority." It is the priority of that which is moral and spiritual, of the things of the will and the affections, of the "heart," in the deep and comprehensive sense in which the word is used in the Scriptures, over the things that are merely intellectual. These two elements, thought and feeling, are both of them present in the

Catechism; each is at its best when they are perfectly blended together. Sometimes the voice that we hear is the voice of the philosophizing, defining, explaining intellect; sometimes it is the voice of the heart, expressing belief, confidence, attachment, devotion. It cannot be said, however, that the philosophizing element is the chiefly characteristic thing in the Catechism, or the principal source of its peculiar charm and power. On the contrary, it is a significant and suggestive fact that the points at which philosophy is predominantly present, at which it is "*intellectus sibi permissus*" that is speaking, in philosophical terms of definition and explanation, are just the points at which there is obsoleteness or obsolescence, while those parts which seem to be immune to obsolescence are the parts in which it is the heart that is finding utterance. Perhaps the most characteristic thing in the Heidelberg Catechism is a certain warmth and glow, by which it is pervaded and suffused, and of which all who are familiar with it are conscious. The Catechism is—let us say it boldly, for the word is used in a good sense—emotional. There are hidden fires in it. There is in it something of that suppressed passion which was in the heart of the Elector Frederick when he declared himself ready to lose his crown rather than violate his conscience; in the heart of Ursinus when he said that he would not take a thousand worlds for the blessed assurance of being owned by Jesus Christ; in the heart of Olevianus when, dying, he replied to the question whether he was sure of his salvation, with a triumphant "*Certissimus.*" The Heidelberg Catechism is a thing of the head; but it is still more a thing of the heart. When, some years ago, there was published in Edinburgh a series of books entitled "*Books of the Heart,*" it was a sound instinct that led the editor of the series to choose, as the first volume of it, the Heidelberg Catechism.

Let it not be thought strange that our Catechism should be characteristically of an emotional quality. It may be that emotion is a more significant thing than it is sometimes considered to be. It may be that it has come into discredit by

being confounded with emotionalism, which is something entirely different. Men sometimes speak, in a contemptuous tone, of "mere feeling," that is to say, feeling that is simply this and nothing more; that is unintelligent and blind; that comes and goes, being irregular and untrustworthy; that is inefficient and unproductive, or, it may be, even productive of evil. All these things may, not without show of reason, be scornfully said of feeling or emotion, which, like all things, has "the defects of its merits" and "the vices of its virtues." And yet it remains true that emotion, as being one of the natural and legitimate elements of our being, is not to be spoken against, or regarded otherwise than with respect. It is reassuring to find it stated on good authority that "the psychologists have recently discovered, after devoting their attention almost wholly to the scholastic operations of the intellect, that the emotions, the feelings, are fundamental to the life of the soul." Emotionalism is bad, but emotion is good. "Nothing great," says Hegel, "is ever accomplished without passion." There are certain things which cannot be done except passionately; to do them otherwise than passionately amounts to not doing them at all. This is especially true as regards a confession of faith. If, as is said in the New Testament, it is "with the heart" that man "believeth unto righteousness," his confession of that belief will have in it something of that emotion or passion which is characteristic of the heart. A confession of faith without anything of the nature of passion in it would be like a fire without heat. The passion may be restrained, the fires may be hidden, as they are in the Heidelberg Catechism, being all the more powerful for that, but they will be present all the same, and they will be the predominant and most characteristic elements in the confession to which they belong.

There is a scientific maxim which says, "*Corpora non agunt nisi soluta.*" Material substances must be dissolved before they can act. It is so with emotion. In order that it may fulfil its office, it is necessary that it be dissolved and diffused.

It cannot act as a thing separate, apart, independent. Its presence is a mysteriously diffused presence; it is in every thought, statement, explanation. Thus, in a state of dissolution and diffusion, it is at its best; especially when fused with thought, its natural and appointed coefficient, it is capable of exercising a vast and beneficent influence. And it is just in this form that emotion is present in the Heidelberg Catechism.

Finally, we name one more principle which is embodied and illustrated in the Heidelberg Catechism, and has much to do with making it what it is. It is the principle of rhythm; following the method of naming we have observed hitherto, we might call it the principle of the priority of poetry over prose. It is intimately related to the last named principle; for genuine emotion is always rhythmical. When it is the heart, as well as the head, that speaks, rhythm and poetry are natural and inevitable. The editor of the Heidelberg Catechism as a "Book of the Heart," speaks of the poetical quality of it, and of the rhythm of some of its utterances, a rhythm which, he says, "clings to the memory like that of an exquisite lyric." "No one thinks," he says, "of a catechism and a poem as having any affinity with each other. The singer would be indignant who should find his raptures spoken in such a dubious connection; yet the Heidelberg Catechism, in some of its parts, has all the characteristics of prose poetry." The author contrasts it, in this respect, with Calvin's Catechism and that of the Westminster divines, "which lack the element of poetry entirely, however excellent they may be in other respects."

That there should be considered to be a constitutional lack of affinity between a catechism and a poem is a curious and surprising circumstance; it is the result of a prevalent misapprehension as to the idea and object of a catechism or confession of faith. When the matter is attentively considered, poetry and the Confession of Faith, instead of being incongruous, will be found to possess affinity for each other in a special and extraordinary degree. If anything ought to be

poetical in spirit, it would seem that it ought to be the Confession of Faith.

For poetry, as Matthew Arnold somewhere says, is that species of language in which man comes nearest to being able to speak the truth. It is the form which language naturally assumes when utterance is at its highest and best. When utterance casts off its fetters and obtains its freedom; when the highest and most august things are spoken of in a worthy manner; when there is discourse, in any wise adequate, of the truth that is of central and supreme significance for the human soul; when thought and feeling are so perfectly blended together that the thought seems all feeling and the feeling all thought; the result is always sure to be, in some form or other, poetry. This statement may easily be tested by considering the character of those few supreme passages in the orations of the world's greatest orators, which have achieved for themselves a sort of literary immortality. They are all of them elevated and august in character because of the lofty and dignified themes to which they relate; and they are all of them characterized by a certain unconscious and inevitable rhythm, being what may be called "prose poetry." The nearer expression approaches to the heart of things, the more rhythmic and poetical it becomes. All the greatest utterances belong to the "eternal melodies."

Poetry is not only the form which language naturally assume when the highest truth is worthily spoken of; it is also the language in which truth must be expressed when it is intended to transmit it to future generations and ages. This is because, while the speech of philosophy speedily becomes obsolete, that of poetry does not, but continues the same from age to age. The chief instance and illustration of this principle is, of course, the Bible. It has to do with the highest truth which is capable of being communicated to the human race; it is an expression and embodiment of this truth in such form as shall render it capable of being received by all men and by all ages; it is a thing which was intended to endure, which has

endured, which shall endure, "from generation to generation." Consequently the Bible is very largely poetry; it has to be so; the chief things of which it speaks could not adequately be spoken of in any other language. The Bible is steeped and saturated in poetry. Much of it is poetical in form as well as in spirit; all of it is poetical in spirit. Not to perceive this is to miss much of its meaning, and to be in danger of misunderstanding many of its utterances.

The same is true of a Confession of Faith, just in the degree in which it is truly and actually that which by its name it claims to be. A confession of faith has to do with the highest, the most vital, the most concerning and affecting truths; it is an expression of the passionate beliefs and convictions of the soul. It is intended, also, for the preservation and transmission of the truth; it is supposed to be constructed with a reference to after days and coming generations. Such being its nature and purpose, it is, when at its best, penetrated and dominated by the spirit of poetry. A confession of faith will probably be found strong where this spirit is present, and weak where it is absent; and the confession of faith which manifests most power of enduring unimpaired from generation to generation will probably be the one which possesses in combination with its doctrinal teaching the most of the poetical quality and character. Let it not be thought surprising that a confession of faith should be of a poetical character; the surprising thing is, rather, that it should not be so. If men have come to believe that a confession of faith has no affinity for poetry, it is probably because they have been in the habit of regarding such confession too exclusively as a system of theology. A confession of faith is something more than a compendium of doctrinal and theological statements; it is, as its name implies, for the confession of faith; and faith is of such a passionate nature that the language in which it is expressed becomes of necessity a species of poetry. Far from being incongruous with poetry, it may not unjustly be said that it is a good test of the excellence of a confession of faith whether

it is rhythmical, musical, poetical, capable of being sung or chanted. A system of philosophy or theology could hardly be chanted; but a confession of faith one ought to be able to chant. The oldest and best of the confessions of the Christian Church possess this capability; the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed may without any sense of incongruity be chanted as a part of the worship of the Church. And the ideal confession, whenever it comes, will probably be more like these; it will be shorter and simpler than some the Church has had; it will be, not less doctrinal, but more poetical; it will be capable, not merely of being taught, but also of being sung. However this may be, the fact remains, as shown by the instance of the Heidelberg Catechism, that, instead of being incompatible with poetry, it is the strength and glory of a confession of faith that in it the highest species of truth should be poetically apprehended and poetically expressed. It is significant that it is the most characteristic parts of the Heidelberg Catechism that exhibit this poetical quality; also, that these are the parts which manifest no signs of obsolescence.

Without doubt, as has been said, there is much in the Catechism, both as a confession of faith and as a book of religious instruction, that is not suited to the requirements of the present day. It contains things which might well be omitted; it omits things which it ought to contain. What changes it ought to undergo to make it acceptable and satisfactory, it is not part of our present purpose to discuss. It may be said, however, that the significant circumstance that it is the philosophical parts of the Catechism that have become obsolete, would seem to indicate that, however the Catechism may be changed, it ought not to be changed by putting more philosophy into it. The philosophy of the twentieth century is no more a finality than that of the sixteenth; it, too, shall become old and pass away; and the confession of faith ought to be expressed, as far as possible, in terms that "shall not pass away." It may be said, also, that whatever may be done with the Catechism, there are in it certain precious things which it would be

a great loss to lose, and which ought by all means to be preserved in whatever may take its place as a confession of faith and as a book of religious instruction. These are such as we have named: its personal and concrete character; its restraint and reserve; its subdued passion; its rhythmical and poetical quality. Above all, the spirit by which it is pervaded is most worthy to be that of whatever confession may take its place. The spirit a man is of, is a thing of more consequence than any particular view or opinion he may hold. It is so with a catechism; the spirit it is of is a thing of more importance than any philosophical or theological statement it may make. Whatever changes may be made in the Catechism, it is to be hoped that the beautiful spirit of it may be preserved. Let those who may be entrusted with the work of revising it beware lest this spirit escape them; for it is a thing as subtle and evasive as it is precious. The Heidelberg Catechism, with all its incorrectnesses corrected, and all in it that is out of date brought up to date, but with its spirit gone, would, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, be an example of retrogression instead of progress, of impoverishment instead of enrichment. But to correct its incorrectnesses, to omit what is antiquated and obsolete, to supply what is omitted, and to preserve intact the spirit of the Catechism—this, if it were possible (which is by no means certain, for the formation of confessions of faith is not congenial to this age), would be an instance of true progress and true enrichment.

HAGERSTOWN, MD.

## II.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.<sup>1</sup>

WM. J. HINKE.

To-day we commemorate the 350th anniversary of the introduction of the Reformed faith into Germany, an event of the most far-reaching significance and importance, for it exerted a lasting influence, not only upon the destiny of Germany, but even upon the whole later history of Europe.

This event of world-wide importance was heralded by the appearance of a small and apparently insignificant little book, of less than one hundred pages, the Heidelberg Catechism, so called after the picturesque city of Heidelberg, situated on the vine-clad banks of the beautiful Neckar valley. By issuing this book Frederick III, the Elector of the Palatinate, was regarded by all Protestant princes as introducing a new faith into Germany differing in several important particulars from the then prevailing Lutheran creed, which, besides the Catholic faith, was then the only tolerated religion of the empire.

The appearance of the little book caused a tremendous stir. Soon angry voices were raised in protest. Pamphlets and books appeared in rapid succession, which denounced its supposed heresies in unmeasured terms, while the princes of the empire threatened Frederick with the loss of his electorate, yea even the loss of his life.

In order to understand the causes which led to the introduction of the Reformed faith into Germany, it is necessary to review briefly the conditions, which prevailed in the Palatinate, when Frederick III became Elector in 1559.

Germany, then as now, consisted of a large number of inde-

<sup>1</sup> Address delivered before the Reformed Social Union of Philadelphia, January 17, 1913.

pendent states, whose religion was determined by their princes, the people having no voice in religious matters. Of these princes a considerable number were adherents of Protestant principles. But while agreeing in all essentials they were by no means united in details. They were in reality split into two parties, named after their respective leaders, strict Lutherans and milder Melancthonians.

The princes of the Palatinate belonged to the latter party. Ever since the 3d of January, 1546, when the Lord's Supper was first celebrated in Heidelberg in Protestant manner, by giving both bread and wine to the communicants, the Palatinate had been Melancthonian, or mildly Lutheran. This appeared especially in the church order, which Otto Henry introduced in 1556, which, while adhering to the Augsburg confession in its liturgical parts, inclined distinctly to the Reformed position in its definition of the Lord's Supper. For, according to it, "there are visible signs given to us in the supper, which serve to remind us of the promise and testify to it, so that each one may apply the promise to himself, *by faith*, while rightly using the sacrament."<sup>2</sup>

It must also be remembered that Melancthon was himself born in the Palatinate and, from the first introduction of the Reformation, in 1546, to the day of his death (April 19, 1560), exerted a powerful influence upon its development. Owing to this influence of Melancthon and to the conservative position of the princes of the Palatinate, a large number of theologians, professors and statesmen were called to fill important offices in church and state, who felt an inclination towards the milder Melancthonian or even Calvinistic position. The historical antecedents, therefore, as well as the influence of its prominent men prepared the Palatinate for the Reformed faith and were themselves the receptive soil, into which Reformed ideas were sown with lasting results.

But the central figure of the stirring events which took place in Heidelberg in the third quarter of the sixteenth cen-

<sup>2</sup> See Seisen, *Geschichte der Reformation in Heidelberg*, p. 58.

tury was, without question, the Elector Frederick III. His life shows a singular chain of providential events, which by a moral necessity led him to the position which he finally occupied.

He was born on February 14, 1515, in the Ducal castle of the little town of Simmern, situated in one of the poorest and most barren districts of Germany, the Hundsrück. His father, Duke John II, of Pfalz-Simmern, was firmly attached to the emperor and the Catholic religion. Aside from other indications of his favor, the emperor had appointed John II president of the superior Court of the Empire, which position he held for years, while the church was supplying his sons and daughters with lucrative offices. Two of his sons had entered the church, while five of his eight daughters had taken the veil. Thus Frederick grew up in an intensely Catholic atmosphere. As a boy he was sent for several years to the most Catholic courts of Europe, to that of the Cardinal of Lorraine at Nancy, that of the Bishop of Liege (now in Belgium), and to the court of the Emperor Charles V, at Brussels. When seventeen years of age, he took part in an expedition of the emperor against the Turks and, on account of his valor, was knighted by the emperor. The lance, which he wielded in battle, is still preserved in his home church at Simmern, fastened to one of the pillars, with an accompanying inscription, testifying to his prowess.

When a young man of twenty-two years, he married in 1537 Maria, the seventeen-year-old daughter of the Margrave Casimir of Brandenburg-Kulmbach, a strong and noble woman, herself an enthusiastic Lutheran, who soon made her husband acquainted with the writings of Luther, induced him to take up the study of the Bible and of theological questions and thereby succeeded in making a Protestant out of him. There were two influences which assisted her efforts. The first was the fact that Frederick himself felt repelled and disgusted by the immorality which he had witnessed at the various Catholic courts. It had impressed upon him the necessity of a moral

reformation in church and state, while the simple piety of his wife showed him the beauty of a true Christian life. The other influence was his own poverty, his slender income, which was hardly sufficient to provide for the rapidly increasing family. The cares of family life turned him to God. Necessity taught him to pray.

Moreover his conversion to Protestantism was accomplished, not without considerable sacrifices. He incurred thereby the lasting displeasure of his father, who would not pardon his apostasy and punished him by still further decreasing his limited income. This reduced his family to still more distressed circumstances and compelled his wife to appeal repeatedly to her relatives for financial help. In view of his extreme poverty his later elevation to the electorate appeared to his contemporaries as an act of special providence, while even his enemies recognized that his devotion to the truth had early exposed him to danger and disgrace. Referring to this time of obscurity and distress, the Elector himself confessed at a later time, that he had felt "like a poor, soiled, sooty kitchen maid, sitting behind the stove, after whom none inquired, because she was so poor and black."<sup>3</sup> The way to the Electorate was opened for Frederick by the fact that two electors, Frederick II, and Otto Henry, passed away childless. With the latter the Heidelberg line of the Palatine princes died out and the Electorate passed to the Simmern line.

When Frederick III became Elector, in February, 1559, he was by no means inclined to the Reformed faith, for in October of that year he directed the tutor of his son, Count Christopher, to instruct him "according to the Augsburg Confession and especially in the catechism of the sainted Martin Luther."<sup>4</sup> Indeed Frederick would have preferred to assume a neutral position among the warring factions in the empire, as well as in his own principality. But circumstances soon forced him to a definite decision.

<sup>3</sup> See *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen*, Vol. I, p. 260.

<sup>4</sup> See Ullmann's interesting sketch of the life of Frederick III in Piper's *Evangelischer Kalender, Jahrbuch für 1862*, pp. 185-199, esp. p. 189.

In 1558, at the recommendation of Melancthon, Tielemann Hesshus, a former student of Melancthon, had been called to Heidelberg as the general superintendent of the Palatinate church. He was a man who had become a perfect zealot for the cause of extreme Lutheranism, intolerant, and over-bearing in spirit, who soon strained every nerve to establish the pure Lutheran faith and worship in the Palatinate. But his efforts met with a determined opposition. Strict Lutherans were but few in number among the higher officials of the Elector. Melancthonians and adherents of the Reformed faith were in the majority, and surpassed the Lutheran extremists both in learning and in personal ability. The leading men who were Calvinistic in their tendencies were: Thomas Erastus, a famous physician and professor of medicine in the University, Peter Boquinus, the dean of the theological faculty and professor of theology, Christopher Ehem, one of the Electoral councillors, Stephen Cirler, the Electoral Secretary, Michael Diller, the court preacher of the Elector, Nicholas Cisner, professor of ethics and the two classical philologists, Simon Grynaeus and William Xylander.

Even at the beginning of his reign, the closest friends of Frederick were afraid of the subtle poison of his Calvinistically inclined courtiers and councillors. As early as April 7, 1559, the Elector's wife, Maria, who was staying at Amberg, wrote to her son-in-law, expressing the fear that the Counts of Erbach (Eberhard and George) might gain influence over her husband, for they were "strongly Zwinglian."<sup>5</sup> But in 1559 there was as yet no real danger of his dreaded apostasy, for shortly after his accession Frederick called Lutheran ministers to vacant charges and a Lutheran professor to the University of Heidelberg.<sup>6</sup>

The first influence which estranged Frederick from the Lutheran faith was the violence and fanaticism of the Lutheran extremists, especially the intolerance and bigotry of his Gen-

<sup>5</sup> See *Briefe Friedrichs*, Vol. I, p. 53.

<sup>6</sup> See Kluckhohn, *Friedrich der Fromme*, p. 50.

eral Superintendent, Tielemann Hesshus. His former teacher Melancthon seems to have known only his great talents and earnest piety, but was apparently unacquainted with his passionate nature and his extreme theological position.

It did not take long till Hesshus was involved in a fierce quarrel with the university, the members of the Consistory and the Calvinistic ministers, especially with the deacon or assistant preacher of the Holy Ghost Church, William Klebitz, who was just about as hot-headed and violent in speech as his opponent. After several preliminary skirmishes, it came to an open rupture between the two men, when Klebitz, in the absence of the superintendent, received from the university the degree of bachelor of theology, defending in his public disputation theses which were essentially Calvinistic. On his return Hesshus turned, therefore, against the university, calling it "a hellish, devilish, cursed, cruel and terrible thing." Klebitz followed his opponent with a similar violent outbreak, challenging him to prove that his views were false. During this time Frederick was away from Heidelberg, being at the diet of Regensburg, where the emperor solemnly invested him with the electorate. Meanwhile, Count Erasmus von Venningen, whom he had left behind as his governor, was hardly able to control the warring factions. When the governor called the ministers into his presence and admonished them to refrain from all controversy until the return of the Elector, Hesshus declared not only that he would forbid Klebitz the administration of the sacraments, but he also threatened the old count himself, Frederick's governor, and the court preacher Diller, with the ban. A few days later the ban was actually pronounced on Klebitz.

Upon his return to Heidelberg Frederick cited the contending parties into his presence, and forbade them, under pain of dismissal, to continue their controversy. He removed the ban from Klebitz and demanded that no other formula be used in the Lord's Supper than the one authorized by the Augsburg Confession.

But Hesshus was not to be silenced. On September 13 he hurled new invectives and denunciations upon Klebitz and even dared to cast suspicion upon the orthodoxy of the Elector and of his councillors.

This was too much even for the long-suffering and patient Elector. On September 16, 1559, both Hesshus and Klebitz were dismissed, the latter, however, with an honorable testimonial.

Shortly afterwards Frederick sent his private secretary to Wittemberg, to ask Melancthon for a written opinion as to what course should be pursued.

On November 3, 1559, Melancthon answered more definitely than might have been expected from his long-continued silence during the theological controversies of the preceding years. He advised that the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper as used by Paul be employed, and he explained communion as "that whereby the union with the body of Christ takes place, not without thought, as when mice gnaw off the bread."<sup>7</sup> He also approved of the act of Frederick dismissing the chief disturbers of the peace. This opinion of Melancthon was of great importance for the future development of Frederick. It did not convince him at once of the correctness of the Calvinistic view of the Lord's Supper, but it sent him to the Bible for renewed study and examination.

As a result he passed whole days and nights, poring over theological books, but above all in the study of the Bible, so that the old court marshal declared "that he was depriving himself of sleep, health and the enjoyment of life, in order to search for the truth."<sup>8</sup>

After the departure of Hesshus peace was by no means established in the Palatinate, for the fanatical chancellor Von Minkwitz, supported to some extent by the old court judge Von Venningen, continued the fierce attacks upon the suspected heretics.

<sup>7</sup> See Kluckhohn, *Friedrich der Fromme*, p. 61.

<sup>8</sup> See Kluckhohn, l. c., p. 62.

How great the alarm of the Lutheran party was can be gathered from the fact that on March 16, 1560, the Elector's wife asked her son-in-law, in a letter, to have public prayers said, in his churches, in behalf of Frederick, that God might keep him in the true faith.<sup>9</sup>

During the years 1560 and 1561 two important conferences were held which exerted a lasting influence upon Frederick's future course of action.

In June, 1560, during the wedding festivities of his second daughter with the Duke John William of Saxe-Weimar, the two Lutheran theologians of his son-in-law, John Stoessel and Maximilian Moerlin, held a public disputation in Heidelberg, lasting five days. The result was that the Lutheran theologians were generally regarded as the better orators and debaters, but that Boquinus and Erastus, the theologians of the Elector, surpassed them in "the thorough defence of the simple truth." But even this conference did not convert the Elector to the Reformed position. His chief aim was rather to maintain peace among his churches and to demand of his theologians adherence to the Augsburg Confession. But when he had exhausted all efforts in trying to induce some of the most ardent defenders of Lutheranism to be peaceful and tolerant, without meeting with any success, a few of the worst offenders were dismissed and, as was to be expected, their places were filled with men more peacefully inclined, more of a Melancthonian or even Calvinistic tendency. The Heidelberg disputation and the dismissal of the main disturbers created quite a sensation among the Protestant princes. Frederick was now openly accused of having departed from the Augsburg Confession. This had never been his intention, for it was not his aim or desire to maintain a separate and distinct position in German Protestantism. He still thought that the differences could be overcome by a synod of the Protestant leaders. Hence he gladly accepted the suggestion of Duke Christopher of Wurtemberg, that, as only two of the original

<sup>9</sup> See *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen*, Vol. I, p. 131.

signers of the Augsburg Confession were still living, all the Evangelical states and princes should sign the Augsburg Confession anew. A conference of the princes was therefore held in Naumburg in January, 1561.

At this conference an attempt was naturally made to find an authentic Ms. copy of the original Confession, as presented to the emperor at Augsburg in 1530. None could be found. They, therefore, had to fall back upon the printed editions. In comparing the earliest editions of 1530 and 1531 the surprising discovery was made that the earliest edition, in the accompanying apology, was almost Catholic in phraseology,<sup>10</sup> which even the strictest Lutheran extremists were slow to accept. Hence the later edition of 1531 was taken as the authoritative text. To it a preface was added, in which the altered edition of 1540 was recognized. This was signed by all the princes present, except Frederick's son-in-law, the fanatical Duke John Frederick of Saxony. The influence of this conference on Frederick was the deciding factor in his development.

The discovery that the first edition of the Augsburg Confession was almost Catholic in its statements, lowered at once the respect which Frederick had formerly had for that historic document. It showed him that even the greatest men reached their later convictions only gradually. If they were mistaken in their first views, might they not also be mistaken in their later views? Before he had unhesitatingly accepted the more moderate Lutheran views of the Lord's Supper; now, however, doubts were raised whether after all they might not be wrong.

This compelled him once more to study the whole question, in the light of the Scriptures, and with the help of ancient and later commentators and books. The leading Lutheran book on this question, to which Frederick was repeatedly referred, was the "Short Confession of the Holy Sacrament," written by Luther in 1544. But this book was singularly weak, filled more with denunciations than solid arguments. Hence it

<sup>10</sup> See Kluckhohn, *Friedrich der Fromme*, p. 88; *Briefe*, Vol. I, pp. 156 f.

made a bad impression on Frederick. A few weeks after the Naumburg conference he wrote to the Saxon Duke: "I find in it little that tends to edification, but Luther denounces in it the false teachers and Zwinglians, and warns against them, which is quite right. . . . Yet he confesses that he knows of their views only by hearsay and does not state how, when and where they teach false doctrines.—This I cannot praise."<sup>11</sup>

The Reformed books, treating of the Lord's Supper, were mostly filled with good reasoning and Scriptural argumentation, which did not fail to influence the Elector deeply, for in the year 1562 he definitely left his neutral course and became a conservative advocate of the Reformed faith.

These then were the various steps that led the Elector to the Reformed faith, which at that time was still regarded as a permissible form of the prevailing Protestantism which enjoyed legal recognition and protection: (1) The general tendency of the Palatinate towards the Melancthonian or more moderate position; (2) the large number of Reformed theologians and officials then in the Palatinate; (3) the violence and fanaticism of the strict Lutherans; (4) the disputation at Heidelberg in 1560 and the conference at Naumburg in 1561, which made Frederick doubt Luther's authority; (5) his own independent study of the scriptures and his peacefully inclined nature. These influences induced him to adopt the Reformed faith.

Having reached this position himself, it was a natural desire to unite his churches upon the same theological position. This could not be done more effectively than by preparing a catechism, which should be based, like his own convictions, exclusively upon the Word of God.

He himself gives us, in the preface to the Catechism, the reasons which actuated him in its introduction. He writes: "I learned in the beginning of my administration, that although my dear cousins, the Electors, my predecessors of blessed memory, had undertaken different Christian orders

<sup>11</sup> See *Briefe Friedrich des Frommen*, Vol. I, p. 167.

and regulations, that they were not carried out as earnestly as they ought to have been and did not yield the fruit that was hoped for. This induced me not only to renew the same, but also, where necessity required, to improve them. I also found no little deficiency in this, that young people everywhere in my electorate, both in schools and churches were carelessly instructed in Christian doctrine, and in some places not at all, everywhere unequally and nowhere by a uniform catechism, but according to each one's private ideas and plans. From this state of things it came to pass that the children were brought up without fear of God and knowledge of his word. I deemed it, therefore, of the highest importance and the chief duty of my administration, to correct the lack of uniformity and other abuses and to bring about necessary reforms. To this end, with the advice and consent of my whole theological faculty and all superintendents and most prominent ministers, I ordered a catechism of the Christian religion to be compiled from the Word of God, in German and Latin, that hereafter not only the youth in churches and schools may be instructed in these doctrines, but also preachers and teachers may have an authoritative form and rule, according to which they can instruct the youth, without making changes and introducing new doctrines." The object of the Catechism was, therefore, according to the Elector's own statement, mainly twofold, purity of doctrine and unity among his churches.

With this object in view, the writing of a catechism was entrusted to a commission consisting, as Frederick put it, of "the whole theological faculty, all his superintendents and principal ministers." All other contemporaneous documents support this statement. Under the direction of this commission Ursinus prepared two preliminary catechisms, a larger one of 323 questions, strongly Calvinistic, elaborating the idea of the covenant, and a smaller catechism of 108 questions,<sup>12</sup> the latter based, after the model of "Common Places" of

<sup>12</sup> These two catechisms of Ursinus are reprinted in Lang, *Der Heidelberger Katechismus und vier verwandte Katechismen*, Leipzig, 1907, pp. 152-218.

Melancthon, the teacher of Ursinus, upon the Epistle to the Romans, with its threefold division of human sinfulness, divine deliverance and Christian thankfulness. This smaller catechism of Ursinus, with its threefold division, became the principal source of the final Catechism, the Heidelberg. The final revision was most probably entrusted to Olevianus, for our Catechism shows the persuasive eloquence of this great theologian. It is written in his fervent style. Moreover the sections referring to the church (Qu. 54-55) and the office of the keys (Qu. 83-85) agree closely with the later Palatinate order of worship, which appeared in November, 1563, and is certainly the work of Olevianus. The Elector himself took an active interest in the very form of the questions. Thus he declared in October, 1563, to the messengers sent to him by Dukes Christopher and Wolfgang, "that the Catechism was composed, not without previous consultation; but after thorough deliberation was prepared by pious men, then presented to him, read by him carefully several times, considered and compared with the rule and guide of God's word and finally published with unanimous approval."<sup>13</sup>

Before the Diet of Augsburg, in 1566, Frederick said: "I can prove by my own handwriting, that after receiving the catechism from my theologians, and reading it, I corrected it in several places."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See Kluckhohn, *Briefe*, Vol. I, p. 465.

<sup>14</sup> Kluckhohn, l. c., p. 726.

An interesting change was made by Frederick in the form of the 78th question. According to a statement of the Reformed professors at Heidelberg in 1707, made in answer to the attacks of Christian Rittmeyer, a councillor of the then Catholic Elector, there was at that time "somewhere a memorial, written by the Elector's own hand, from which it appears, that the very words of the Catechism had to be submitted to his approval. 'The answer to the question: Do then Bread and Wine become the real body and blood of Christ? was at first worded thus: 'Just as little as before the body of Christ became essential, real bread, when he called himself the true bread [John 6: 32], and yet he was truthful in his words.' Which answer was taken

When the work was completed, it was laid before a Synod, which convened in Heibelberg for eight days in January, 1563. The work was received with unanimous approval and subscribed by all save one, the superintendent of Ingelheim, who it seems later joined his associates. The Synod closed its sessions on January 17, 1563, when all partook of the Lord's Supper, celebrated in the Reformed manner, with bread that was broken, instead of wafers handed to the communicant. On Monday, January 18, all the members of the Synod were called to the castle, where the Elector dismissed them with an address, expressing his satisfaction with their work. On the following day, January 19, the vigorous and beautiful preface was written by the Elector, with which the book came from the press during the course of the next month.

The first edition was remarkable by the fact that the questions were unnumbered, the scripture passages were only cited by chapters, the division into Sunday lessons was absent and the question, later numbered as the 80th, treating of the difference between the Mass and the Lord's Supper, was entirely wanting. We now know that this 80th question was inserted at the urgent representation of Olevianus. On April 3, 1563, he wrote to Calvin: "The question of the Lord's Supper had been omitted in the first German edition. . . . Admonished by me, the prince ordered it to be added to the second German and the first Latin editions."<sup>15</sup> In the second

almost verbatim from the Greek Dialogues of Theodoret. This was changed in order that it might not be thought that it was the intention to make merely a symbol or figure of speech out of the sacrament, although in the following question the opposite is brought out at length. When the catechism was adopted with this one change, I was not only well satisfied, but, according to my opinion, it redounded to the honor of God and my special pleasure.' From this one specimen it follows, that the authors of the catechism could not have inserted anything into the Eightieth Question, without the knowledge and consent of the Elector.' See *Christliche Erinnerung der Reformirten Professoren Theologie zu Heidelberg*, etc., 1707, p. 6; Gooszen, *De Heidelberg. Catechismus*, p. 98 f.

<sup>15</sup> See *Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. XLVII, p. 683; Gooszen, *De Heidelbergse Catechismus*, p. 116.

edition the 80th question still lacked the closing sentence in the definition of the Lord's Supper and also the closing sentence in the definition of the Mass, including its denunciation as "an accursed idolatry."<sup>16</sup> This last addition, made in the third edition of 1563, was most unfortunate. It added no strength to the catechism, but exposed it and the church it represented to fierce persecutions in later years. The catechism was issued in its final form in the Palatinate Liturgy or Order of Worship, which appeared in November, 1563. It, together with the Consistorial Order of the year 1564, completed the organization of the Palatinate church.

The crowning success came to Frederick at the Diet of Augsburg, on May 14, 1566, when his enemies had planned to exclude him from the peace of the empire, as not being a true adherent to the Augsburg Confession. Then his immortal and noble defence of his catechism silenced all opposition so effectively that even his opponents were compelled to confess that Frederick was more pious than all of them.

To-day we celebrate the appearance of this little, but world-renowned book, which, as Dr. Goebel has well expressed it, may be regarded as "the flower and fruit of the whole German and

<sup>16</sup> The additions made to the 80th question in the third edition have never been given in English, although they are important enough to deserve careful attention. In the following quotation they are indicated by square brackets:

"The Lord's Supper testifies to us that we have full forgiveness of all our sins through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which He Himself once accomplished on the cross; [and that by the Holy Ghost we are ingrafted into Christ, who with his true body is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father and is to be there worshipped]. But the mass teaches that the living and the dead have not forgiveness of sins through the sufferings of Christ, unless Christ is still daily offered for them by the mass-priests; [and that Christ is bodily under the form of bread and wine and is therefore to be worshipped in them]. And thus the mass at bottom is [nothing else than] a(n) (idolatrous) denial of the one sacrifice and passion of Jesus Christ, [and an accursed idolatry]."

This shows that the third edition made *four* separate additions to the text of the second edition, while one word of the second edition, put in round brackets, was dropped as superfluous.

French reformation. It has Lutheran fervor, Melancthonian clearness, Zwinglian simplicity and Calvinistic fire, all melted into one,"<sup>17</sup> and therefore it has become the one common confession of the Reformed churches all over the world.

AUBURN, N. Y.

<sup>17</sup> See Göbel, *Geschichte des Christlichen Lebens in der Evangelischen Kirche*, etc., Vol. I, p. 392.

### III.

## THE THEOLOGY OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

A. E. DAHLMANN.

When we speak of the "Theology of the Heidelberg Catechism" we would not be understood as asserting that the little book, as rich in content as it is brief in expression, as great in power as it is small in bulk, to whose value this year's celebration of its 350th jubilee throughout the Protestant world bears witness, was intended to be a strictly logical and systematic statement of Christian doctrine. Its original purpose was to be a text-book for the teaching of Christian truth as held by those German Protestants who found no warrant in Scripture for certain decisively and exclusively Lutheran doctrines. Its aim was to teach the vital saving truths of Christianity not so much as a system of doctrine to be grasped by the mind, but rather to present to the mind and heart the fundamental facts and truths given in the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed unto us in the Holy Scriptures, those facts and truths which are essential to our salvation. The manner in which these truths find expression in our catechism is the noteworthy characteristic and distinguishing glory of this small book, which is a priceless boon, not only for the Reformed Church in the United States whose only confession of faith it is, but for the Christian world; and in regard to which a righteous pride and a reverent regard should not be wanting in any member of the Reformed Church, whose mind and heart were charged with these truths by the training in a Christian home and the instruction of a faithful pastor. We have in the catechism more than a mere statement of these facts and truths—and a careful and exact

statement it is;—they are stated as the profession of the personal faith of the believer, a profession growing out of his own personal experience and made with all the fervor and joy which such experience brings. Its definitions and statements are therefore not merely radiant with the cold light of logic; they are at the same time aglow with the warmth of love to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

And yet there is a well-connected and comprehensive system of Christian doctrine underlying all these statements from beginning to end; they are not "*disjuncta membra*," not disconnected teachings. The beautiful connection of thought running through the catechism is so evident that it needs no illustration. Even the uneducated who has become familiar with it through wise instruction has a connected and orderly knowledge of the teachings of Christianity, though he may not be fully conscious of it. He will never be in danger to place that which belongs in the center in the circumference, or vice versa. He will be able to judge of any teaching or opinion of the day in its relation to the fundamental truth of Christianity. Such a one will in this respect never be as a reed shaken by the wind. And the educated Christian, the professional theologian, finds in the Heidelberg Catechism not only a comprehensive theological system underlying it as its framework, but a theology far in advance of the time when it was written; in its freedom from scholasticism in which so much of the Protestant theology of the seventeenth and eighteenth century was enthralled; in its broad and comprehensive grasp of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; in its view of Christianity as a life, a spiritual dynamic to regenerate not only the individual but also society; and in its irenic spirit.

A thorough and exhaustive treatment of the theology of the Heidelberg Catechism would be a valuable contribution to the theology of to-day. Within the narrow limits to which a REVIEW article must be confined, we can at best only refer to some essential features of this subject.

1. The first essential feature of the theology of the Heidel-

berg Catechism is that it is *Biblical*. We do not mean that it is Biblical in the sense of being supported by proof texts taken "ad libitum" from any part of Scripture; nor that all the proof texts quoted in the original and subsequent editions are applicable and adequate to show that the doctrine referred to is taught in the Bible. The progressive character of divine revelation was not recognized at the time the catechism was written, neither did editors of later editions observe it. We mean to say that not only the tenor of the catechism taken as a whole, but that every one of its teachings considered separately and in its connection, is in such full accord with Scripture truth, that it is an accurate statement and an edifying elucidation of Bible teaching. The doctrine of total depravity in the sense that man is entirely incapable of self redemption and is wholly dependent for his salvation—a salvation here and now, perfected in eternity—upon the grace of God freely offered in Christ Jesus; and the doctrine of original sin as an iniquitous and sinful condition of our nature, transmitted according to the law of heredity by the father of the race to all his posterity, these doctrines are taught clearly and unequivocally in the catechism; but we submit that although they are relegated by some to the fossilized orthodoxy of the past, they are distinctly taught in the Scriptures, as is testified by the best and most authoritative grammatico-exegetical and historico-critical commentaries of to-day. When the catechism states that "we are by nature prone to hate God and our neighbor," it emphasizes a fact, of which every one who with noble endeavor, deep earnestness of heart and burning zeal strives for the "higher life" becomes most painfully and humiliatingly conscious; the fact namely that the ascent to the "holy mount of God" is more difficult and impossible for us than that of Mont-Blanc and the Matterhorn on account of the very pronounced aversion of our nature to the life required, whereas the descent into the quagmire of moral corruption is as free and easy as the exhilarating coasting down the hillside on a brisk, sunshiny and breezy winter's day. Does it merely ex-

press the experience of the apostle when he says, the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do? Is this not rather the sad wail out of the depths of every soul which hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Does this not clearly express the tendency of the human heart away from God, its natural selfishness which is an aversion against the righteous claims of God and our neighbors upon us? And do we question the Scriptural correctness of the strong word used in the catechism: "prone to hate," when the apostle himself declares: carnal-mindedness, that is the state of mind and heart of the natural, unregenerate man, is enmity against God?

And the doctrines of a vicarious atonement of the necessity of the satisfaction of the righteousness and holiness of that God who is infinite love, it is true, but *righteous* and *holy* love, if human sin and guilt are to be removed; of the fact of such satisfaction rendered by the vicarious sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ; these doctrines as explicitly taught in the catechism, are they not essentially and perfectly Scriptural? If you would expunge from Scripture all those passages which teach explicitly or impliedly a vicarious atonement, an atonement which is on the one hand a necessary satisfaction of the divine righteousness and holiness and on the other a reconciliation of man to God wrought by infinite love, you must eliminate the greater part of the New Testament; and in order to do that you must throw aside as worthless most of the grand hymnody of the Christian ages as well as reconstruct and rewrite the liturgies of the church from the apostolic time to the present day. More than that you must replace the old unmovable rockbottom foundation of a faith that gives the guilty conscience peace, that conquers sin and affliction in life and triumphs in death: "*the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin,*" by a better and more reliable one. Who will dare the attempt more atrocious than the storming of Olympus?

Space forbids to give more instances of the Scripturalness of the teachings of the Heidelberg Catechism. The doctrines

we have instanced were selected, because they have borne the brunt of the attack against our precious heritage from Heidelberg, as out of date according to the latest light shed on the Scriptures. But the same Scripturalness can easily be shown for all its teachings. The forty-fourth question, it is true, does not explain the descent into hades. But what is stated there in regard to the believer's comfort in all his tribulations is as much Bible truth as is found in any answer.

2. The theology of the Heidelberg Catechism is *Christocentric*. In this respect it surpasses all books of its kind contemporaneous with it and is far in advance of the age in which it was written. The cardinal and fundamental, the great central truth of divine revelation as given in the Bible, revealed indistinctly in the Old Testament, fully manifest in the New, that which constitutes the unity of all the different books of the Bible, is the self-revelation of God in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and redemption, life and blessedness in Him for the individual and for the human family. Jesus Christ is the great central sun from Whom all the light and truth of Scripture radiates and in Whom it is focused. The authority and spiritual value of any book of Scripture is greater or less in proportion as the Christ is more dimly or clearly revealed in that book. Jesus the Christ is the sum and substance of the Bible. As of the Bible He is also the sum and substance of the Christian religion, its alpha and omega. Christianity is the life of Christ in the soul of man, transfiguring him as to his inner and outer life into a child of God and therefore into sanctified manhood; it is the redeeming, regenerating and life-giving presence and activity of the Christ in the world, leading to the victory of His eternal kingdom of truth, righteousness and peace in the Holy Ghost. All the springs of that life which is the light of men for the individual and society are in Him. Now if the Christ is the sum and substance of the Bible, its fundamental truth and central fact, and if Christianity is life proceeding from the Christ present and active in the soul and in society, then it follows that the person of the

Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the revelation of the Father, Who unites us with the Father, in Whom we have redemption and life, must be the central and unifying principle of a theology which is truly and fully Christian; the principle underlying all its teachings, from which all its doctrines are evolved, and in which they are all gathered together as the different parts of the rose or lily are gathered together and blended in the fragrant and beautiful flower. In this sense we claim that the theology of the Catechism is Christocentric.

This characteristic is evident in the classic and beautiful first question and answer which is the introduction to the book and gathers in itself all its teachings as it were in a focus. This introduction may be compared to the portal and vestibule of a palace all radiant with the light and glory within, affording the beholder even before he enters the reception hall an enrapturing vision; or to the living seed germinally containing within itself all the richness and beauty of the matured fruit. Not knowledge of doctrines but the personal relation between the believer and Christ, Who has purchased him as His own, preserves him in perfect safety amid all the changing scenes of life, dwells within him by His spirit as the power and assurance of life eternal which is here and now a life of godliness and service and of glory hereafter, this is the essential characteristic of Christianity and the well-spring of consolation and blessedness in life and death.

The threefold division of the catechism according to the epistle to the Romans is Christocentric; namely, (1) the need of the Christ on account of human sinfulness; (2) the redemption by the Christ, and (3) the joyous thank-offering of heart and soul to the Christ. How thoroughly and well this great central truth of Jesus the Christ and redemption and life in Him is carried out through the whole book is evident to every one from its pages.

We have a striking illustration of this fact in the position and space given to the creed and its elucidation. Jesus Christ the only begotten of the Father, conceived by the Holy Ghost,

born of the Virgin Mary, suffered, risen and glorified, is the central truth of the Apostles' Creed, the fundamental article of our faith. Remove or change this in any way and you eliminate the organizing principle of the creed so that you have disconnected fragments left. How well this was recognized by the authors of the catechism, how perfectly and naturally they incorporated the creed in the catechism so that its explanation fills not only a considerable and most important part of the book, but the Christ, the revealer of the Father and the Savior of men is the vital truth in every question and answer.

This Christocentric character of the theology of the catechism comes into view very clearly in the 20th, 21st and 60th questions. In the two former we have a very clear and exact definition of true faith, analyzing it as a belief of, an intellectual assent to the revealed Gospel truth; but essentially as a personal trust in the Christ, bringing us into vital union and fellowship with Him, so that with His life pulsating within us we partake of His salvation here and of His glory hereafter.

In the answer to the 60th question we have a simple but comprehensive statement of the pivotal doctrine of the Reformation, Justification by Faith. It is described as a declaratory act of God, Who grants and imputes to the believer the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ. But he receives it only by faith, and as this faith brings us into vital union with Christ and makes us partakers of His life, we are justified on the ground of what Christ has done *for* us and is doing *within* us. Thus there can be no justification without the Christ for us having become the Christ within us, whose complete dominion in thought and feeling, in word and deed is effected in the process of sanctification.

That Christ is the central and vital principle of the theology of the catechism can easily be illustrated by many other questions, but those referred to will suffice. That the person of the Christ, the Godman, the revealer of the Father, must be the central and vital principle of a theology which is Biblical,

is taught in no confession of faith, in no catechism for the instruction of the people so clearly and is the unifying and organizing principle of none of them so completely as it is of our precious heritage from Heidelberg. The unifying principle of many Protestant theological systems is the sovereignty of God and the doctrine of the decrees; of others it is the facts of Christian experience and human consciousness as testifying to Scripture teaching. A theology which is thoroughly Biblical, that is, in full accord with the spiritual truth revealed in the Bible, must be Christocentric. We have such systems; Dr. J. A. Dorner's great monumental work, *Christliche Glaubenslehre* is preëminent among them and by no means out of date. The Christian church to-day is surely not without some indebtedness to the Heidelberg Catechism for this central and unifying principle of a theological system which is comprehensive and Biblical; a principle recognized as such to-day by theologians of all Protestant evangelical churches.

3. The third characteristic of the theology of the Heidelberg Catechism which we would mention is that it is *experiential*. By this we mean that it is not based upon innate ideas nor upon merely intellectual conceptions of Scripture teaching, but upon Scripture facts and truths which have become our own conscious possession by way of personal experience. The system of doctrine taught in the catechism is the truth revealed in Holy Scripture and experienced as the power of God unto salvation in the heart and life of the believer; a truth, therefore, which is not merely a concept of the mind but a living fact in the soul. Our idea of a certain truth may be indefinite and obscure, so that this truth after all remains something foreign to us. But when we have learned to know the meaning, value and power of this truth by the test of experience, it becomes precious to our hearts and luminous to our minds, and what was formerly an abstract idea becomes a blessed and living reality. As such realities the Scripture teachings are given to us in our catechism. And upon these realities rather

than upon abstract ideas its theology is founded. Thus we know that we belong to Christ not only because the Bible says so, but also because of the testimony of the spirit within. Sin, redemption, repentance, faith, conversion, justification, sanctification, are not mere ideas but experiences and realities. It is not the abstract idea of Christ deduced from the Scriptures by a process of reasoning, which gives unity to our catechism and makes it an organic whole, but the Christ of the Scriptures living and dominant in the soul of the Christian by personal faith and communion with Him, known by the soul's experience as the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Revealer of the Father, giving us the vision and leading us to the realization of the length and breadth, the height and depth of the love of God and filling us with the fulness of God. It is the Christ living and reigning in the soul and in the world of men for the victory of His kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, Who is the sum and substance of the whole catechism, to Whom every question, either directly or in the connection in which it is found, bears witness, and to Whom it leads. This is evident from the first question as to our only comfort in life and death unto the last witnessing the triumphant faith, that our prayers in His name and for the fulness of divine grace and the choicest blessings for time and eternity are surely answered for His sake.

Every question of the catechism is addressed to the believer who is a living member of Christ, and every answer is a confession of his faith by which he has realized the saving and life-giving power of the Christ, a personal testimony of his heart's experience.

This is a great excellency and glory of our catechism. Its theology has its basis in facts, the great facts of divine revelation, and the no less significant and wonderful facts in the realm of consciousness within the soul. It meets the modern requirement of science that it be grounded in fact, that reality precedes theory, the fact our consciousness or idea of it; it is in full accord with the demands made to-day of a theological

system, that life precedes doctrine and the latter is an outgrowth of the former and not vice versa. What is heralded as a modern acquisition of theological thought we find in the little book from Heidelberg of the sixteenth century. How fully up to date it is!

4. The latter is also true of the fourth characteristic of its theology, viz., its *irenical spirit*. It has been said repeatedly that the catechism is melanchthonian in tendency, *i. e.*, mediating between the Lutheran and the Reformed—Calvinistic—position. This claim is made by such an authority as Heppe in his *Deutscher Protestantismus*. Dr. Sudhoff positively denies it. The history of the catechism seems to prove that it was intended to be a clear, definite and popular statement of Reformed doctrine over against Lutheranism. Melancthon took a stand against the bigoted and intolerant teachings and practices of the Lutheran theologians of his day and endeavored to bring about a consensus of opinion and a *modus vivendi* of the contending parties. Of a mediating tendency toward Lutheran views or of a yielding of distinctively Reformed convictions we find no evidence in the catechism. But the effort toward a better mutual understanding and more fraternal relations between the two great divisions of Protestantism, by avoiding all harshness of expression, all judgment and condemnation of those holding opposite views, all intolerance in word and spirit, is evident throughout the book. The catechism breathes the spirit of reconciliation, Christian brotherhood and love, which without sacrificing principle and deep-rooted convictions of the truth, recognizes the opponent's right to his honest convictions, the fallibility of all human knowledge, and the possibility of being one in love to the master and in efforts for His glory, though differing in their views of non-essentials. This spirit animated Melancthon; but Calvin none the less, who declared himself ready to sail through ten seas to promote the union of the Protestant churches. This spirit has found beautiful expression in our catechism.

The authors were undoubtedly Calvinists and believed in

the doctrine of predestination and the decrees as taught in Geneva. We know that Ursinus was a Calvinist from his commentary on the catechism and other writings. We know that Olevianus had studied at Geneva and was one of Calvin's devoted adherents. And yet the doctrine of predestination and the decrees is mentioned nowhere in the catechism. We will not argue with those who claim that the doctrine is there though not explicitly stated; that the inference from what is stated naturally leads to it. Such expressions as in the first question, "all things must work together for my salvation"; in the 31st question, "who defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us"; in the 53d question, "and He (the Holy Spirit) shall abide with me forever"; in the 54th question, "and forever shall remain a living member of the same (the Church of God)," are quoted to prove that the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is taught in the catechism and by inference the doctrine of the decrees which is necessarily implied in the former teaching. We submit that the doctrine of the "*perseverentia sanctorum*" does *not* necessarily presuppose or imply the Calvinistic teaching of the decree of election and reprobation. Be that as it may, the question calls for an answer: Why is predestination not mentioned in a book which was not only written for instruction but was also a confession of faith written by Calvinists and for a church which looked toward Geneva for its teachings? It will not do to answer: the doctrine was considered too abstract for a book which was to be used for the religious instruction of the young and unlearned. Other doctrines just as abstract are mentioned and briefly explained, such as the Trinity, original sin, the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ, the quickening of spiritual life and the gift of special grace by means of the sacraments, and the real presence of Christ in the Lord's supper. Its omission is rather to be regarded as an evidence of the *irenical* spirit pervading the catechism. It is in perfect consonance with this spirit that a teaching, which, though it was not essential to

salvation, was one of the chief matters of controversy, should not be mentioned.

In the questions concerning the Lord's Supper the doctrines of *transsubstantiation* and *consubstantiation* are declared incorrect and the Reformed doctrine for which the church is *indebted to Calvinism clearly stated; viz., the real presence of Christ in the supper and the nourishment of the believer's soul by the true body and blood of Christ through the Holy Ghost. We have a candid statement and a manly stand in our catechism on a subject in regard to which the two churches so essentially differed, a statement required in a publication which was to be the doctrinal standard of the Reformed Church over against Romanism and Lutheranism. But how carefully worded! how much closer the two views are brought together than when championed by Luther and Zwingli at Marburg! How carefully all harshness and judgment are avoided! How with all clearness of conception and loyalty to conviction the treatment of the question at issue evinces a conciliatory and fraternal spirit! How favorably our catechism compares in this respect with others contemporaneous with it and other doctrinal standards!*

If in objection to the foregoing statement we are referred to the 80th question, and especially the last sentence, the historical fact is a sufficient answer, that this sentence was not in the original edition but was inserted later by command of the authorities.

The catechism reflects the spirit of the Reformed Church, whether in France, Holland, Scotland, Switzerland or Germany. Clear in its conceptions of the truth, tenacious in its adherence to the faith once delivered to the saints, true to its convictions, manly and heroic in their defence, it was ever ready to recognize those of different views as brethren in Christ, to offer them heart and hand in Christian love, as Zwingli did to Luther; zealous to do its share in making the article of the creed concerning the communion of saints a reality in this world. The theology of the Heidelberg Cate-

chism does not ignore the doctrinal differences between its own and other churches, but it does not unduly emphasize them. It builds its system with the great fundamental truths of evangelical Christianity, not arranged with reference to the exclusive denominational point of view, but brought into the right relation to the great central truth of Christianity, viz., Christ, the Godman, the revealer of the Father, the Savior of the individual and of society, the king of the heart and of redeemed humanity. So far from inculcating sectarianism, this theology cherishes the spirit of conciliation, fraternity and Christian love, so well expressed in the 55th question and answer. The idea that a different conception of doctrine can well go hand in hand with brotherly love and hearty coöperation in the general work of the kingdom is implied in the theological viewpoint of our catechism, an idea of whose meaning, scope and power the churches of Christ have become more fully conscious to-day than ever before and have consequently drawn more closely together than at any other time. The Reformed Church may well rejoice in the fact of having contributed its share to this closer union of the Churches by the teachings and influence of the catechism whose 350th jubilee it celebrates.

5. Another merit we claim for this little book so highly esteemed by all the branches of the Reformed family of churches is the *ethical* character of its theology. It emphasizes with no uncertain sound the life of obedience and devotion to God, of righteousness, of loving service to God and man, as the fruitage of a genuine living faith in Christ. The believer in whose heart Christ dwells by faith, is represented as recognizing both the high privilege and solemn obligation of such a life. Christ has redeemed us and renews us after His own image, *for the purpose* that we should offer ourselves a holy sacrifice of thanksgiving to Him by living the Christ-life in this world. Thus we are assured of our faith as genuine. This life is a service by which we win others to Christ. Question 86. Such obedience and service is not a mere matter of duty. The child of God finds *delight* in living according to

the will of God in all good works. Question 90. This life of godliness and righteousness, however, is not spontaneous; it is not a fruit which grows out of the regenerated heart according to natural law as the apple grows out of the tree bearing it. It requires faithful, constant, wholehearted and prayerful effort. The ten commandments are explained as God's will and rule for the Christian's life. Christians are actuated by the earnest purpose to live not only according to some, but according to *all* the commandments of God. Question 114. As individuals, as members of the family, the church, society, as citizens of the state, as members of the great brotherhood of man, they are to serve their day and generation and hasten the coming of the kingdom. For such life and service we need ever new and increasing supplies of divine grace and power, to be had for the asking. Hence the latter part of the catechism treats of prayer as the key which unlocks all the treasures of divine love for the soul.

The Reformed Church has never emphasized one-sidedly the great truth of justification by faith, but giving this foundation truth of Protestantism the proper place and importance in its teaching, it has always insisted on a righteous and godly life as the evidence and fruit of genuine faith. No one can live this life isolated from others. He is a member of what we would call the social order. The Christian must recognize his relations to his fellowman and the social order of which he is a part, his dependence upon it and his obligation to it. He is not to live unto himself but unto Him Who loved him and gave Himself for him; and he is to do this by serving his fellowman individually and collectively. This truth finds expression in the catechism and is implied in the entire third part of the book. The Reformed churches from the time of Calvin unto this day have not been oblivious to this truth and have therefore taken a live interest and actively participated in all efforts for the betterment of society, the relief of suffering, the rescue of the fallen, the spread of the Gospel of the kingdom for the salvation of the individual and society. At the same time

their aim has been in theory and practice to build up the individual into Christian manhood and Christlike character, manifesting itself in a righteous and godly life.

A theology which is ethical in the sense mentioned above, is in demand to-day. It is the theology which the church must teach its ministry if the pulpit is to have a hearing and be a power for the salvation of men. It is the theology which the Lord Jesus Christ has given us in the Holy Scriptures. His Gospel is a gospel of divine grace and peace, and of regenerating and sanctifying power for the individual and the social organism. From this Gospel the Heidelberg Catechism has taken its theology, a theology which in its essential features is as true, as well adapted and needful for the twentieth century as it was for the sixteenth.

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#### IV.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

THOMAS M. BALLIET.

Education to be effective and to be free from waste, both of effort and of time, must have a clearly defined aim. In order to determine this aim in religious education, it is necessary to form some definite conception of the nature of religion, and to eliminate from it elements which are intimately associated with it, which have not infrequently been mistaken for it, and which are not unimportant but do not constitute its essence. It is not the purpose of this article to attempt to formulate a scientific definition of religion or to enter upon a philosophical discussion of it; its aim is purely practical. Nor is it necessary for the purpose in hand to discuss the nature of religion in its universal conception, as the problem before us is the more specific one of the nature of the Christian religion; and what, in consequence, should be the aim of the religious education in the Christian Church.

It is rather a singular fact that nineteen centuries after the death of the Founder the question is still asked, "What is Christianity?" and that there is still wide divergence in the answers given. But there is no escape for the teacher of religion from the necessity of forming, for his own guidance, some more or less definite conception of what the religion of the Old and the New Testament stands for in order that he may make it effective in the lives of men.

What are the fundamental elements in the Christian religion, and by what means and methods can we make them a vital force in life? The answers to these two questions deter-

mine the aim and the method of religious education for the Christian Church.

Religion is a universal element in the human soul; there is no race, however low in the scale of civilization, which is wholly devoid of it. Instances of races without a trace of religion which used to be cited by the earlier anthropologists have been proved to be erroneous. Religion is a universal instinct; the human being is born with it. The expression of this instinct may, as in the ethnic religions, be on a low plane; it may be, as in the other great historic religions, on a higher plane; and it may be, as in Christianity, on the highest plane. The study of comparative religion has widened our conception and has taught us not to classify religions as true or false, but as differing from one another in the degree in which they express the highest aspects of the religious nature and hold these up as a motive for conduct.

According to the teachings of Jesus, one of the fundamental elements in the religion of which He was the founder, is love; Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

A second fundamental factor is reverence, or the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. This feeling is a part of our religious nature whether directed toward God or not; reverence for God is merely its highest form; it includes reverence for everything great in nature and for everything high in human character and human achievement. It is the capacity to appreciate the greatness of what is great in God's creation as well as the greatness of the Being of God Himself. "The undevout astronomer is mad."

A third element is trust, absolute trust and confidence in the love and care of our Heavenly Father. This is the message of the prophets of the Old Testament and of Christ and His disciples in the New.

A fourth element is conduct, the doing of God's will, "good

works," "righteousness." This again is a part of the message of both the prophets and the gospels. This, however, does not mean mere outward action but includes right motive. On this point the teachings of Jesus differ radically, not from the message of the prophets of the Old Testament, but from the teaching of the Judaism of His day. He emphasized motive as the essential thing in conduct; they laid chief stress on the outward act. Conduct apart from motive ceases to be conduct; it is mere action, like the falling of a tree which may kill a man but involves no moral responsibility so far as the tree is concerned.

The word "faith," not as used in theological literature as a technical term, but as used in the Bible in a popular sense, includes to a remarkable degree the essential elements of the religious nature, or the religious life in man.

It is used in the Old Testament and in the New in the sense of trust, confidence in God. It is this trust and abiding confidence that enables the Christian to bear suffering and affliction, and is exemplified in a thousand ways in the history of the Church as well as in the daily lives of men and women. "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." It was this trust which bore up St. Paul toward the close of his life, as we recall from familiar passages in his later epistles.

The word faith is used in a sense almost identical with love. The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is the classic passage to illustrate this use. Faith even to remove mountains devoid of love is an empty thing.

Again, James tells us that "faith without works is dead." In short, faith as trust and love must issue in conduct; they must be the motive, the impelling force, which leads to right conduct. Modern psychology teaches us that the biological function of feeling both in the animal series and in man is to lead to action, and in man also to conduct; and when it does not function in this way it degenerates into sentimentality and weakens character. The Biblical teaching is in harmony with modern science on this vital point.

Again the word faith is used in the sense of logical conclusion, belief based on evidence. We have an instance of this in case of the "doubting Thomas." The colossal error of the church all through the ages of Christian history has been to single out this use of the word faith and treat it as if it were the essential, if not the only, usage of the word in the Bible. This has led to all the bloody persecutions of the Church, to the unfortunate divisions within the Protestant church, and to the bitterness of theological controversy through the centuries. As Emerson says, "churches have been built on tropes," and as Professor Seeley of Oxford once said, "theologians are never more bitter in their controversies than when the differences between their views are almost imperceptible—except, perhaps, when they are quite so." Faith as a mere intellectual assent to a dogma, or to the propositions of a creed, has been made the whole of faith, while Jesus never emphasized it. With him faith was a matter of the heart and of life and conduct, not of mere intellectual belief. His severe rebuke of the unbelief of the heart in case of the Jews contrasts sharply with His mild reproof addressed to Thomas. Such unbelief as is attributed to Thomas in the Gospel was little else than intellectual honesty and genuine sincerity. It was this kind of "unbelief" which Tennyson had in mind when he wrote: "There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds."

It is true that in the later writers of the New Testament there is a use of the word which foreshadows its post-apostolic use as identical with the word "creed." "The faith" and "The faith once delivered to the saints" are expressions which indicate the beginning of this tendency. But there is no trace of this in the teachings of Jesus. Paul, too, uses the word sometimes in a mystical sense as a part of his theory of justification, which, however, need not be considered here.

Religion, as viewed in the Bible, is therefore essentially love, reverence, trust, conduct, and what is implied by these. Now love is an act of the heart; so are reverence and trust; they

imply a certain degree of knowledge, for we cannot love, reverence and trust a being of whom we are wholly ignorant; but the emphasis is always on the emotional factor and not on the intellectual as the essential one. The teachings of Jesus are unmistakable on this point. But emotion must bear fruit in right living, in conduct, and conduct is an act of the will. Our religious nature involves therefore the heart and the will, the two deepest elements of character. It involves secondarily also the intellect in that no rational being can rest satisfied without making an effort to comprehend this spiritual nature within him and the Infinite Being towards whom it is directed. This intellectual need has led to the formulation of creeds and dogmas. Such creeds and dogmas have, therefore, their legitimate function in satisfying the human reason, but they must not be substituted for the far deeper elements of the heart and the will as constituent elements in our religious nature. Creeds and dogmas are therefore not divine, not inspired and not infallible, but human and fallible. They represent the effort of the human mind to comprehend the facts of the religious life; and they must therefore change with the increase of light which comes from history, from the discoveries of new documents, from science and philosophy, and from human experience. Dogmatic theology bears the same relation to religion which botany bears to the world of plants, zoology to the world of animals, and astronomy to the stars of heaven. There were plants before botany, animals before zoology, and stars in the heavens before there was a science of astronomy. The stars do not depend for their existence upon astronomy but astronomy depends on the stars. When Copernicus revolutionized our conception of the solar system, it created no change in the heavens; the planets kept on majestically in their course as they had for untold ages before.

In like manner, religion does not depend on theology, but theology depends on religion and a change of theological conviction does not necessarily involve a change in religion. While this is not absolutely true, as is obvious to any one who

holds to idealism in philosophy, as the writer does, it is nevertheless true that there is more danger of confounding theology with religion as is popularly done than of drawing the distinction too sharply. If religion could be destroyed by heresy it would have been destroyed ages ago. If it rested primarily on reason, and not on an instinct far deeper than reason, it would not have outlived all the theological warfare of the past.

Moreover, if religion were a matter primarily for the intellect it could not be universal; only those possessing some considerable capacity for thinking could be religious. As it is primarily a matter of the heart and of life all men have the capacity to be religious, and we know that the finest type of Christian living is not infrequently found among persons of little education. Jesus selected his disciples from among the uneducated.

In view of this line of thought, stated in brief outline only, what, we may ask, is the problem of religious education, and what is the peculiar function of the catechism in such education?

If we are born with a religious nature, it follows that religion need not be implanted in the human soul. We are not "so far depraved that we are wholly unapt to any good and prone to all evil." Such a dogma of "total depravity" is not supported by anything we know in a scientific way of the human soul, nor is it sustained by modern theological thought. Our spiritual aspirations are inborn; they need only to be developed. In the words of Augustine, "Thou, O God, hast created us for Thyself and our hearts are without rest until they rest in Thee."

1. My first proposition, then, is that the problem of religious education is not to implant but to cultivate and develop the religious nature inborn in every human soul.

2. As religion is primarily a matter of the heart, the problem of religious education is one of nurture more than of instruction. It should aim to develop love in all its higher

phases; love of God and love of man above all things, but also tenderness towards the lower animals and sympathy with every living thing. Cruelty of any kind is inconsistent with the love of God. It should aim to develop the feeling of reverence in its broadest sense; reverence for God, for parents, for the great characters of history, for everything good and great in the world. Such reverence springs not from knowledge alone and can not be developed by mere instruction. It is awakened in large part by the emotional attitude of the teacher; it must be caught rather than taught. Emotion is contagious; it is largely the product of unconscious suggestion by the teacher and equally unconscious imitation by the pupil. This is illustrated in case of the spreading of a panic in a crowd. Hence the child will imitate emotionally the emotional state of the teacher. If the teacher feels no reverence when he speaks of religion and of God he will awaken no reverence in the child. On the contrary, he will communicate his own irreverence, or emotional indifference, to his pupil. Hence, there are so few people, even among the educated, who are competent to teach religion. If it were merely a question of instruction it would be much less difficult to find suitable teachers. Much of the instruction in the average Sunday School cultivates the spirit of irreverence.

Furthermore, religious education must aim to cultivate the innate trustfulness of the child, and above all things see to it that this trustfulness is not abused, shocked, or in any way weakened. This is the most lovable trait of childhood, and the trait, no doubt, which Jesus had in mind when He admonished His hearers to be as little children, and when He said "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

3. But while religion is fundamentally rooted in the emotions and the instincts, it is also a matter of volition. Faith without works is dead. Religion is also conduct, it is life. It is impossible to draw sharply a line of distinction between morality and religion. While religion and morality had each its own independent origin, and the two were afterwards brought

together and religion became ethical and God was conceived as a moral being, so far as Christianity is concerned, it is impossible to conceive of religion as real and vital except as it issues in right conduct. We may say without going far wrong that morality is the highest, the truest expression of religion. The actual doing of God's will is a higher expression of the religious life than either worship or prayer, essential as all three are.

Hence, all genuine moral education is religious education. This again is less a matter of instruction than of inspiration, of instilling high motives, and of developing right habits.

In short, to be a Christian does not mean intellectual assent to certain propositions in a creed; it means to be Christ-minded; to look upon life as Christ looked upon it; to feel towards God and towards man as He felt; to be actuated by the same motives by which He was actuated; and to live a life of self sacrifice as He lived it.

4. In method religious education must therefore appeal primarily to the emotions, to the heart. Hence the teaching must be concrete. Aristotle said over two thousand years ago "Abstract thought moves nothing." No one becomes indignant at a proposition in geometry. The abstract thought of suffering does not arouse our sympathy, but a concrete case, a flood, a fire, a shipwreck, or a famine. This is the psychology of the parable, and it explains why Jesus uttered so few abstract truths. The teaching of creed and dogma, therefore, cannot touch the heart and does not constitute the most vital element in religious education. The actual, concrete life of Christ must be vividly pictured to the children's imagination, and the most precious parts of the Bible should be read to the class so well that they will want to hear the same passages again and again. The Evangelists and the writers of the Epistles should be allowed to speak directly to the young. This should be done with a minimum of indispensable comment.

5. A knowledge of the Bible is therefore only a means and not an end in religious education, although it is made an end

in most Sunday Schools. A Biblical scholar is not necessarily a religious man, and a man can be religious without wide knowledge of the Bible.

6. But there is a place for dogma in religious education, as it furnishes the intellectual element in such education. It satisfies the craving of the intellect to comprehend the facts of religion; and to the majority of people it furnishes their philosophy of life. The problem of evil in the world; the mystery of death; the great calamities which befall men, communities and nations; all these challenge the thought of men and women even of little education. Theology has furnished them answers to these questions; the answers have not all been correct, for some have been contradictory of one another, but each has accepted those which satisfied the cravings of his own mind.

7. The function of dogma in religious education is to satisfy the intellect, to remove doubt, or at least to alleviate it; it should therefore be taught to the young only when doubt arises. Statistics show that this usually comes during the early teens and continues sometimes through the later teens. As this is the period when young people in all ages have joined the church, the period, too, when religion can get its deepest hold on the heart, it follows that there is a place for instruction in dogma in the religious instruction of young boys and girls generally known under the name "catechetical." Such instruction should, however, only cover the great questions upon which young people crave knowledge; it should not force upon them a system of theology in outline as most catechisms do. It should occupy a subordinate place in such instruction, whose chief aim should be to deepen the religious life, to make the strongest possible appeals to the heart, and to discuss the great ethical problems which such young people will soon have to meet in their lives; in short, to make religion a vital force in their lives.

8. It is questionable whether the memorizing of abstract answers to questions, as presented in a catechism, is an effect-

ive method. The memorizing of a very few fundamental statements may, perhaps, be a help in after life to those who have not the ability or education to follow clearly an informal discussion of vital theological questions while they are young; but the fact is that such propositions are usually soon forgotten. Modern pedagogy does not sanction the memorizing of abstract scientific propositions which are not understood. The memorizing of the concrete truths of the Bible is a different matter. The memorizing of carefully selected portions of the Bible is a very important feature of all religious instruction; even if they are not wholly understood at the time, the life experiences of the future will interpret them.

9. But in order to make most catechisms available for such instruction they would have to be radically revised, the Heidelberg Catechism included. They teach the dogmas of the reformation period and are largely out of harmony with modern theological thought. I realize that this depends on one's own point of view; but there is surely quite a large body of ministers and laymen in all protestant churches who can no longer accept all the dogmas taught in the catechism of their own church. Modern thought has entirely changed our points of view, and any theological teaching which ignores this fact is sure to weaken its appeal to the religious consciousness of men. It is often said that men are indifferent to theology and to doctrinal preaching, but they are indifferent only to dogmas which they can no longer accept and which seem to them to be out of harmony with modern thought. Men are alive as never before to theological thought which deals with modern religious questions from the modern point of view.

10. While I should not place a high value upon the memorizing of a catechism, nor upon emphasizing dogma in detail, I would place the highest value upon religious instruction to young people preparatory to their joining the church which would make the strongest possible appeal to their hearts and make religion vital in their lives. I would teach them dogma only to meet their doubts, and I would encourage them to

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express their doubts and their difficulties with the utmost frankness. Such instruction and such frank discussion should, and I think inevitably would, establish intimate confidential relations between them and their pastor which would immensely increase his power for good over their lives. If churches give up the formal teaching of the catechism, it is to be hoped that they will not abandon all religious instruction in special preparation for admission to the church. Such instruction, if it is of the right character, and the solemnity of confirmation, make a deep impression upon young people at that impressionable age.

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## V.

### A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE HEIDELBERG, LUTHER'S SMALLER, AND THE WEST- MINSTER SHORTER CATECHISMS.

GEORGE W. RICHARDS.

A comparison of three catechisms, prepared at different times, in different lands, by different men, and partly for different purposes, may be considered an impossible task. The points of agreement may not be sufficient to permit a comparative study. Closer investigation, however, will bring to light certain characteristics, which enable one to put these books into one class, both in form and in contents. They have the word "Catechism" in their title. They are intended for the instruction of the youth in the fundamental truths of the Christian religion. They contain expositions of evangelical, in distinction from Catholic, Christianity and belong to the conservative, rather than to the radical, type of Protestantism. Since they have been published, each has become a symbol of faith; the first in the Reformed, the second in the Lutheran, and the third in the Presbyterian, Churches. Recognizing, therefore, both points of difference and of agreement, we shall attempt a comparative study of the three catechisms.

In order to condense the results of our study within the prescribed limits, we shall confine ourselves to a consideration of the following points: (1) The purpose of their composition; (2) their evangelical characteristics in distinction from Roman Catholicism; (3) the differences between the Heidelberg and Luther's Smaller Catechism; (4) the differences between the Heidelberg and the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

I. Since the year 1523, Luther had in mind the preparation

of a booklet which would contain all that is necessary for a Christian to know and would be adapted to the teaching of children and simple folk. The essentials of a Christian's knowledge he defined in the preface to his Larger Catechism as follows: "However, for the common people we should be satisfied if they learn the three parts which Christendom has received as a heritage from the olden time." He referred, of course, to the Decalogue, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. In vain did he urge Jonas and Agricola to prepare a handbook of this kind. Yet the importance of "a coarse (*groben*), plain, simple, good, catechism," was brought home to him, as never before, by his tour of inspection of the churches of Saxony in 1528. He describes the status of the congregations as he found them in the preface to the Smaller Catechism: "The deplorable condition in which I found the religious affairs of your parishes on my recent visit of inspection has impelled me to publish this concise and simple Catechism. Merciful God, what wretched ignorance I beheld! The common people—especially in the villages—apparently have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and even many pastors are ignorant and incapable teachers. Though all are called Christians and have the privilege of the sacraments, yet they cannot even repeat the Lord's Prayer, nor the Creed, nor the Ten Commandments. They live like brutes, and, having now the light of the Gospel, rankly abuse their Christian liberty."

He at once set himself to the task of writing a religious handbook for "crude villagers." He was at work on the Larger Catechism in January, 1529; but before he finished it, he prepared also the Smaller Catechism "for children and the family." It was issued in the form of a booklet in May, 1529. In delightfully homely and yet impressive questions and answers, Luther expounded the Decalogue, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar—the same succession of subjects which the Bohemian Brethren had made familiar in their Catechism. The sole purpose of the Smaller Catechism was to teach "the

young and the unlearned," while the Larger Catechism was intended for the use of ministers and teachers and the more advanced laymen. "When you have finished the Smaller Catechism," he says in the preface, "begin with the Larger Catechism and give the words a more comprehensive explanation."

The Heidelberg Catechism was written a generation after Luther's Smaller Catechism. It was prepared at the request of the Elector Palatine, Frederick III. In the preface written by the Elector, the method and purpose of its composition are set forth as follows: "And accordingly, with the advice and coöperation of our entire theological faculty in this place, and of all Superintendents and distinguished servants of the Church, we have secured the preparation of a summary course of instruction, or Catechism of our Christian Religion, according to the word of God, in the German and the Latin language; in order not only that the youth in churches and schools may be piously instructed in such Christian doctrine, and be thoroughly trained therein, but also that the Pastors and Schoolmasters themselves may be provided with a fixed form and model, by which to regulate the instruction of youth, and not, at their option, adopt daily changes or introduce erroneous doctrine."

The Catechism was intended to serve a two-fold purpose. It was to be a confession and standard of faith for pastors and teachers throughout the Palatinate, and a religious handbook for youth in churches and schools. The work was finished in January, 1863.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism was prepared under the auspices of the Westminster Assembly, which was convened as a standing body of counsellors on ecclesiastical affairs by the long Parliament which opened in November, 1640. The Parliament passed an ordinance that Divines in number 121, supplemented by 10 peers and 20 members of the House of Commons (40 being a quorum), "should meet and assemble themselves at Westminster in the Chapel called King Henry

the VII's Chapel, on the first day of July, in the year of our Lord One thousand six hundred and forty-three," and thereafter "from time to time to sit, and be removed from place to place" and to "confer and to treat among themselves of such matters and things touching and concerning the Liturgy, Discipline, and Government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same from all false aspersions and misconstructions, as shall be promised unto them by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament, and no other; and to deliver their opinions and advices of, or touching the matters aforesaid, as shall be most agreeable to the word of God, to both or either of the said Houses, from time to time, in such manner and sort as by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament shall be required; and the same not to divulge by printing, writing, or otherwise, without the consent of both or either House of Parliament."

"The four points or parts of uniformity" which the Assembly was to prepare, were a confession of faith, a form of church government, a directory of worship, and a catechism. Through these ordinances "the churches of God in the three kingdoms" were to be brought "to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church government, directory for worship and catechizing." The Assembly had bound itself in all its transactions to "the *preservation* of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, against our common enemies," on the one hand; and on the other, to the *reformation* of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed churches."

After the Confession of Faith was finished, the new catechism was taken up, and from September 14, 1646 to January 4, 1647, was rapidly passed through the Assembly up to the questions which dealt with the fourth Commandment. While they were engaged on the Larger Catechism, members of the

Assembly became convinced that they were attempting an impossible feat. In the words of the Scottish Commissioners, they were trying "to dress up milk and meat in one dish." The Assembly, therefore, called a halt, and "recommitted the work that two formes of Catechisme may be prepared, one more exact and comprehensive, another more easie and short for new beginners." Recommencing on this new basis, the Larger Catechism began to be debated on April 15, 1647, and was finished on the 15th of the following October, and sent up to Parliament on October 22. The Shorter Catechism was taken up on August 5, 1647, and was finished November 22 and sent up to Parliament November 25, 1647. It was approved by Parliament September 22, 1648, and issued under the title, "The Grounds and Principles of Religion contained in a Shorter Catechism, According to the Advice of the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, to be used through the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales."

In Scotland it was approved by acts of the General Assembly of 1648, and ratified by the Estates of Parliament February 7, 1649. It at once became in Scotland the text-book in religion in the schools and has held that position up to this date; and for a long period it was scarcely less popular in Non-Conformist England than in Scotland. From both sources it was transmitted to their affiliated churches in America; and in the extension of the mission work of the several Presbyterian Churches in the nineteenth century, its use has been diffused throughout the world. Professor B. B. Warfield summarizes its merits as follows: "No other Catechism can be compared with it in its concise, nervous, terse exactitude of definition, or in its severely logical elaboration; and it gains these admirable qualities at no expense to its freshness or fervor, though perhaps it can scarcely be spoken of as marked by childlike simplicity. Although set forth as 'milk for babes' and designed to stand by the side of the 'Larger Catechism' as an 'easie and short' manual of religion 'for new beginners' it is nevertheless governed by the principle (as one of its authors—

Seaman—phrased it), ‘that the greatest care should be taken to frame the answer not according to the model of the knowledge the child hath, but according to that the child ought to have.’ Its peculiarity, in contrast with the ‘Larger Catechism’ (and the Confession of Faith), is the strictness with which its contents are confined to the very quintessence of religion and morals, to the positive truths and facts which must be known for their own behoof by all who would fain be instructed in right belief and practice. All purely historical matter, and much more, all controversial matter—everything which can minister merely to curiosity, however chastened—is rigidly excluded. Only that is given which, in the judgment of its framers, is directly required for the Christian’s instruction in what he is to believe concerning God and what God requires of him. It is a pure manual of personal religion and practical morality.”<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the several catechisms largely determined their form and their contents. The Smaller Catechism of Luther and the Westminster Shorter Catechism were designed to teach the “young and the unlearned” or to be “a more easie and short form for new beginners.” They were not supposed to be standards of doctrine. For the latter purpose, the Lutherans adopted the Larger Catechism and the Augsburg Confession, and the Westminster Assembly prepared the Confession of Faith and the Larger Catechism.

The Heidelberg Catechism, however, was to serve the two-fold purpose of a norm of doctrine and a book of instruction. It combines, therefore, in a single work what the Lutherans and the Westminster Fathers formulated in three separate documents. This fact will account for certain differences in form and contents between the Heidelberg and the other catechisms. In form the latter are briefer and in style simpler than the former. Luther’s Catechism has forty questions, the

<sup>1</sup> The data on the Westminster Catechism are taken from an article by Prof. B. B. Warfield on “The Westminster Assembly and its Work,” *Princeton Theol. Review*, April, 1908.

Westminster one hundred and seven, the Heidelberg one hundred and twenty-nine. In the nature of the case, the Heidelberg Catechism required more space for its purpose than that which is taken in the other catechisms. Written a generation after Luther's Catechism, and at a time when the Palatinate was rent by theological controversy of the most malignant sort, the authors of the Heidelberg had to so formulate its doctrine as to bring an end to the strife between the Lutherans, Melancthonians, Zwinglians, and Calvinists in the province. At the same time, they had to set forth Reformed doctrine in a moderate way so as to satisfy the Elector and to conciliate all the parties in his realm. This required keen discrimination between Catholic and Protestant ideas, between Lutheran and Reformed doctrines, and between high Calvinism and moderate Calvinism. The authors of the Heidelberg, therefore, were compelled to go more into detail in doctrine and definition than Luther or the authors of the Westminster Catechism.

The Heidelberg is, also, more polemical in certain questions than the other two Catechisms. The polemical elements, however, are not wanting in the Lutheran confessions nor in the Westminster standards. They are excluded only from the Smaller Catechism of Luther and the Shorter Catechism of Westminster. The Heidelberg Catechism, having to serve as a catechism and a confession of faith, not only goes far more into detail in doctrinal definitions and theological statements, but admits certain polemical statements which the other Catechisms happily omit.

## II. EVANGELICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE THREE CATECHISMS.

However widely the catechisms differ from one another, they agree in their opposition to Rome and in their loyalty to evangelical Christianity. This opposition is shown by the omission of material which plays a prominent part in the catechetical works of the Catholic Church. Not a single question is devoted to relics, pilgrimages, processions, mortal

sins, indulgences, five of the seven sacraments, holy orders, the Virgin, and the saints. This silence indicates that a consideration of these doctrines and customs is foreign to the genius of Protestantism. The points in which the catechisms differ from Catholicism, though the differences are not stated with equal definiteness, are the following: the original state and the fall, faith, justification, good works, prohibition of invocation of saints and of images, the mass, and the sacraments.

The evangelical character appears in direct statements or in implications underlying the three Catechisms. The sense of depravity and the need of redemption are the psychological basis from which the Reformation proceeded. The helplessness of man, therefore, and the redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ are fundamental in the three documents. They, also, agree in accepting the Bible as the norm of doctrine and life. The objective ground of salvation is the atonement made by Jesus Christ, while the blessings of redemption are appropriated by faith in Him. The motive for Christian living is found in gratitude for redemption, or in the desire to glorify God, not in the necessity of performing works of merit. Only two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are recognized as biblical. The doctrine of the priesthood of believers, while not directly taught in a single answer, underlies the three formulas.

### III. THE HEIDELBERG AND LUTHER'S SMALLER CATECHISM.

We have already alluded to the brevity and to the simplicity of Luther's Catechism. In both these respects it is better adapted to the instruction of youth, while the Heidelberg on account of its fullness and thoroughness is more suitable for persons of mature age. Certain minor verbal differences appear also in the rendering of the Decalogue, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. The Heidelberg Catechism gives the Commandments in full, following the twentieth chapter of Exodus and the old Jewish and Greek division; while Luther

presents merely an abridgment, and follows the Roman division by omitting the second Commandment and splitting the tenth into two.

The Heidelberg retains the term catholic or universal with the addition of Christian in the article of the Creed: "a holy Catholic (or universal) Christian Church." Luther omits "catholic" and substitutes for it "Christian." In the Lord's Prayer the Heidelberg uses the modern form "*Our Father*" (*Unser Vater*), while Luther in his Catechism (though not in his translation of Matt. 6:9 and Luke 11:2) adheres to the Latin and old German form of "*Father our*" (*Vater unser*)—"a difference tenaciously maintained by the German Lutherans." The Heidelberg divides the prayer into six petitions, like the Greek commentators, and translates *ἐκ πονηροῦ* "from the evil one" (*vom Bösen, i. e., from the devil*); while Luther, like Augustine, numbers seven petitions, and translates (herein agreeing with the English version) "from evil" (*vom Uebel*).

Each Catechism contains five main parts: the Decalogue, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; but the order and the setting of the parts differ. Luther puts them side by side without an attempt to show how the several parts are related to one another. He observes the following order: the Decalogue, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacraments. Nitzsch, a German theologian, says: "The Catechism of Luther contains the material for building but is not a building." The Heidelberg Catechism is controlled by a clearly defined plan, which is set forth in the second answer: the misery of man, the redemption of man, man's thankfulness for his redemption. Into this framework the five main parts are set as follows: in the first part, in place of the Decalogue, the two Commandments of love are put as a summary of the Law through which comes a knowledge of sin; in the second part, the Creed and the Sacraments, in the third part the Decalogue and the Lord's Prayer, are explained. This order is not without significance. The Heidelberg expounds

the Decalogue in the third part, since it is to be followed in its Christian aspect as a permanent rule of life. Luther regards the law in its Jewish or pedagogic aspect, as a schoolmaster leading men to Christ. Hence he places it before the Creed. Ursinus says on this point: "The Decalogue belongs to the first part so far as it is a mirror of sin and misery, but also to the third part as being the rule of our new obedience and Christian life."

In its arrangement of material the Heidelberg Catechism conforms to the plan of the Epistle to the Romans and Melancthon's *Loci*. It follows the logic of life rather than the logic of the schools. It is soteriological, reflecting the way of salvation as experienced by the saints of the ages. It must be acknowledged, however, that for this plan, the Heidelberg is indebted to Luther far more than to Zwingli or to Calvin. In the preface of a work earlier than the Smaller Catechism, entitled "A Short Form of the Ten Commandments, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer" (1520), Luther defines the relation between the Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer as follows: "The Commandments teach a man to recognize his malady, so that he realizes and experiences what he can do and what he can not do, what he can avoid and what he can not avoid, with the result that he knows himself to be a sinful and wicked man. Then, secondly, the Creed offers grace as a remedy and he is enabled to be godly and keep the Commandments. It reveals God and His mercy made available and offered through Christ. Thirdly, the Lord's Prayer teaches him how to desire and seek this grace, and shows how to secure it, by means of regular, humble, and comforting prayer. These three things virtually comprise the entire Scriptures." Professor Réu has, also, brought to light a Lutheran Catechism entitled *Kurtzen ordenlichen summa*, reprinted in Heidelberg in 1558, in which he claims to find an anticipation of the plan underlying the Heidelberg, and concludes that "one of the most notable merits of the Heidelberg, its systematic arrangement, came from a catechetical work of Lutheran origin."

In doctrine it is difficult to compare the Heidelberg with the Smaller Catechism of Luther, since the latter limits itself to a simple exposition of the five main parts, without making doctrinal distinctions. The doctrinal difference between the Heidelberg and the Smaller Catechism appears mainly in the definitions relating to the Sacraments. But when one contrasts the Heidelberg with the Lutheran type of doctrine, he will find numerous points of difference which were readily detected by the earliest critics of the Catechism. The Emperor Maximilian wrote a letter, dated April 25, 1563, to the Elector Frederick, acknowledging a receipt of a copy of the Catechism, in which he reminds the Elector that the Catechism is contrary to the Augsburg Confession and to the ancient Catholic religion in its doctrine on baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the ascension of Christ. In the same year, May, 1563, three Lutheran Princes, whose territory joined the Palatinate, sent a letter to Frederick, in which they enumerated the erroneous doctrines in the new Catechism. Among them are the following: the doctrine on baptism, the Lord's Supper, Christ's humanity in relation to his divinity, man's freedom, election. They emphasized also the revolutionary tendency of Zwinglianism and Calvinism, which made itself felt in the lands where this view of the gospel prevailed.

So far as the doctrine of the sacraments is concerned, as set forth in the Heidelberg and the Smaller Catechism of Luther, the distinction is clear, though it is made without any polemical bitterness. The Heidelberg, evidently with the Lutheran view in mind, distinguishes sharply between the external signs of the sacraments and the spiritual realities which they symbolize. These realities are not bound up with, nor communicated through, the material elements. They are merely symbolized and sealed by the visible elements. Baptism and the Holy Supper signify and seal unto thee "that thou has a part in the one sacrifice of Christ on the Cross." Baptism in the Calvinistic sense has clearly only representational and confirmatory significance. The blessings of forgiveness and re-

generation are not imparted through or by water, but by the Holy Spirit whose operation may coincide with the baptismal act, but who "under no circumstances," works through the baptismal water. Luther in the Smaller Catechism says in answer to the question: "What benefits does baptism confer? It *worketh* forgiveness of sins, *delivers* from death and the Devil and *gives* everlasting salvation to all who believe this as the words and promises declare." Such an interpretation of water and the word and such an operation of the word through water, the Reformed Churches in none of their confessions have ever acknowledged.

In the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, also, the Catechism clearly differs from the Lutheran teaching. Luther's Smaller Catechism, in answer to the question: "What is the sacrament of the altar?" says: "It is the true body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, *under* the bread and wine, given unto us Christians to eat and to drink as it was instituted by Christ himself." If we may accept the interpretation of this definition of later Lutheran theologians, all communicants, worthy and unworthy, receive through the mouth, in, with, and under, the elements, the body and blood of Christ. The Heidelberg Catechism steers clear of the conception of a corporeal real presence in the elements and a reception of this presence through the mouth by believer and unbeliever. Answer 75 lays stress on the fact "that with His crucifying body and shed blood He Himself feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life as certainly as I receive from the hand of the minister and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord." This nourishment, however, is not given *under* the bread and wine, for the bread and cup of the Lord are no more than "certain tokens of the body and blood of Christ—not vehicles nor instruments." The most that one could claim is, that the spiritual food is imparted by the mediation of the Holy Spirit, at the same time that the bread and wine are received. Nor does any one save the believer receive the body and blood of Christ; the unbeliever receives only bread and wine. In the

sacramental teaching of the Catechism, the views of Zwingli and Calvin are blended. The Lord's Supper is described both as a memorial and as a food. The heavenly nourishment, however, is imparted to the communicant through the mediation of the Holy Ghost, but not through a material channel of bread and wine.

In the *Creeds of Christendom*, I. p. 543, Dr. Schaff says: "Luther's Catechism is the most churchly of the three (including the Heidelberg and the Westminster) and adheres to the Catholic tradition in its order and arrangement. It assigns a very prominent place to the Sacraments, treating them in separate chapters, coördinate with the Decalogue, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer; while the others incorporate them in the general exposition of the articles of faith. Luther teaches baptismal regeneration and the corporeal real presence, and even retains private confession and absolution as a quasi-Sacrament. The Heidelberg and Westminster are free from all remnants of sacerdotalism and sacramentalism, and teach the Calvinistic theory of the sacraments, which rises, however, much higher than the Zwinglian."

#### IV. THE HEIDELBERG AND THE WESTMINSTER CATECHISM.

In comparing these catechisms it must be remembered that the one is a German work of the sixteenth, and the other an English work of the seventeenth, century. The controversy in the Palatinate was between the ultra-Lutherans and the Calvinists, in England and Scotland between the Anglicans and the Puritans. The main point at issue between the former was the doctrine of the sacraments; between the latter the doctrine of divine sovereignty. It is significant that the Heidelberg Catechism vents its polemical feeling in the 80th question, which denounces the Mass as "an accursed idolatry." The theological wrath of the Westminster theologians finds expression in Chapter XXV, Section VI, of the Confession of Faith, which says: "There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ, nor can the Pope at Rome in any

sense be head thereof; but is that anti-Christ, that man of sin and son of perdition that exalteth himself in the Church, against Christ, and all that is called God."

In the interim between the Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Standards, a bitter controversy arose in Holland between the Calvinists and the Arminians. The decretal, far more than the sacramental, aspects of Calvinism were under discussion. The relation between the will of God and the will of man, or between divine sovereignty and human freedom, in the process of salvation, was the bone of contention. The so-called Five Points of Calvinism were formulated in opposition to the Five Points of Arminianism. For a century afterwards the question of election and reprobation was central in theological disputations in Great Britain and in New England. The Heidelberg, written nearly fifty years before the Synod Dort convened in 1619, shows no trace of the Five Points. But the Westminster Standards, composed about twenty-six years after the decrees of Dort, and designed to differentiate Puritanism from Anglicanism which had now become Arminian in its theology, were clearly controlled by the decretal Calvinism of Dort. Thus the spirit pervading and the scheme underlying the Heidelberg and the Westminster Catechism differ widely. This difference was accentuated doubtless by the distinctive national genius of the English and Scotch on the one hand, and of the South Germans on the other. The former were by nature intellectual and legalistic; the latter mystical and experimental.

In certain points, both the Heidelberg and the Lutheran Catechism differ from the Westminster. They retain the Apostles' Creed as a basis of doctrinal exposition, while the Westminster puts it in the appendix and substitutes a new logical scheme of doctrine for the old historical order of the Creed. The former strike a personal and experimental note in the form of questions and answers, addressing the catechumen as a member of the Church. The answers contain the actual or the prospective experience of the catechumen. The

latter is objective and impersonal, and states its answers in abstract propositions. The Heidelberg and the Smaller Catechism use the warm language of experience and life; the Westminster uses the language of the schools and of dogma. The former are less definite and more suggestive; the latter excels in brevity, terseness, and accuracy of definition.

Before we consider the differences between the Heidelberg and the Westminster, we shall enumerate certain points of agreement. Both are Calvinistic symbols, though the Calvinism of the Heidelberg is modified and mollified by the spirit of the German Reformation. In type of doctrine they differ from Lutheranism and from Anabaptism, and belong to the Reformed branch of Protestantism. Both Catechisms emphasize the sole authority of the Word of God as over against the traditions or opinions of men. They stand for "the Church reformed according to the Word of God." In worship and life men are taught to conform to the Scriptures and to seek the glory of God—a thoroughly Calvinistic note. True to the Reformed genius, also, is their emphasis on the absolute dependence of the believer on God, on the perseverance of the saints, the demand for ethical proof of faith, and the rejection of material channels for the mediation of saving grace. In their definition of sin, atonement, faith, justification, and the sacraments, they may differ in the form of words, but in substance they are in accord with each other.

The differences between the Catechisms may be clearly seen in the arrangement of the material. The Heidelberg is divided into three parts: (1) Man's misery, (2) man's deliverance, (3) man's thankfulness for his deliverance. The definitions are determined by man's experience of salvation. The five catechetical parts are brought together, not simply in a mechanical way, or fitted into a speculative scheme of divinity, but they are organically related by the logic of the Christian life. The ultimate question to be answered in the Heidelberg is: "How are men to find comfort in life and in death?" The comfort is found in the fact that they belong to Jesus Christ,

that in him they enjoy the Father's providence, and that through him they are assured of eternal life and inspired to every good work. Each part of the Catechism is controlled by the idea of comfort. As a rule, therefore, only the positive and edifying side of Christian doctrine is presented. Metaphysical distinctions and transcendent mysteries are excluded. The doctrine of election to salvation and holiness, for example, is so presented as to inspire humility, gratitude, and comfort; but nothing is said of the decree of reprobation, or of a limited atonement. These are questions for theological discussion, and not for catechetical instruction.

The Catechism is anthropological; it starts with the cry of man for help out of the depths of sin. It is soteriological and christological; it shows how men are saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Even the motive for Christian living is not primarily the glory of God, nor loyalty to the Scriptures; but gratitude for the grace of redemption—a soteriological basis even for Christian ethics.

The first question of the Westminster strikes a keynote wholly different from that of the Heidelberg. It defines the chief end of man as consisting in glorifying God and enjoying Him forever. The Heidelberg seeks man's comfort in life and in death; the Westminster, the purpose and goal of man's existence. The comfort of the one is found in the salvation of Christ; the goal of the other in the glorification of God. The divisions of the Westminster are based upon the answer to the question, "What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him." This rule is found in the Scriptures, and, accordingly, the two-fold divisions of the Catechism are stated in the answer to Question 3: "The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man." Division one extends from Question 4 to Question 38; divisions two from Question 39 to Question 107. The following topics are discussed in the two divisions: (1) definition of God, the decrees of God, creation and providence, sin and the fall, redemption,

Jesus Christ the Redeemer, the application of redemption by effectual calling, justification, adoption, sanctification, eternal blessedness; (2) obedience as required by the Ten Commandments, conviction of sin, faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, the use of the means of grace for communicating the benefits of salvation, the Word, the sacraments, prayer as defined in the Lord's Prayer.

The Catechism is a compendium of Christian doctrine arranged according to a theological scheme, for memorizing and practical instruction. The same order of topics is followed in the Confession of Faith and in the Larger Catechism, though the substance of these longer formulas is condensed and simplified in the Shorter Catechism "for catechizing such as are of weaker capacity." The plan of arrangement is equally appropriate for a treatise on systematic theology. The Catechism embodies the conception of biblical revelation stated in terms of the scholastic orthodoxy of the seventeenth century, and as it was comprehended by the most cultured and devout Puritan minds. It is the clearest and concisest definition of Calvinism that is found in any language. Professor Curtis rightly calls it "an acknowledged masterpiece, the triumph of happy arrangement of condensed and comprehensive instruction, of lucid and forceful expression."

Yet when one compares the plan of the Heidelberg and of the Westminster, he will readily see how widely they differ. The definitions of the former are based on the Christian consciousness—the knowledge of sin, the way of redemption, the life of the redeemed—as realized in fellowship with Jesus Christ. The definitions of the latter are based on the teaching of the Scriptures concerning God and duty. The Bible is used abstractly, apart from the religious consciousness of the believers. In the Heidelberg the emphasis is laid less on the Bible than on the Christ, who, in living union with His people, is the object of faith and the source of life. For this reason, we say again, the Heidelberg is in spirit soteriological and christological; the Westminster, theological and legalistic.

A comparison of specific doctrines will bring out more clearly the difference in tone and tendency. Two things run through the Westminster which are not mentioned in the Heidelberg—the doctrine of the decrees and the doctrine of the covenants. The decrees of God are to be realized through the covenants. After the covenant with Adam failed, God entered into a covenant of grace to “deliver those elected to eternal life out of the state of sin and misery” (Qu. 20). The benefits of redemption are limited, therefore, to the elect. In the Heidelberg there is no trace of the idea of the covenant. The comfort of the Christian is based on the one offering of Christ on the cross. The doctrine of mystical union with Christ takes the place of the covenants. The scope of salvation is not defined in the Heidelberg in terms of election, but in terms of faith. The human, rather than the divine, side is emphasized in the saving process. In answer to Question 20, “Are all men then saved by Christ, as they have perished by Adam?” the Heidelberg says: “No, only such as by true faith are ingrafted into Him and receive of His benefits.” In answer to Question 20, “Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?” the Westminster says: “God having out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into a “state of salvation by a Redeemer.” Here the divine factor in salvation is intoned. The Catechism is true to its theological spirit in contrast to the anthropological and christological trend of the Heidelberg.

How are the benefits of Christ's redemption appropriated? Here again, the divine factor is emphasized in the Westminster, the human in the Heidelberg. In answer to Question 29, “How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?” the Westminster says: “We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.” In the Heidelberg the definition of the way of appropriating the benefits of redemp-

tion sets forth man's faith rather than God's activity. In answer to Question 60, "How art thou righteous before God?" the Catechism says: "Only by true faith in Jesus Christ, etc." Observe that faith is centered not on a book but on a living person. Union with Christ through faith brings with it all the blessings of redemption. This is the mystic note pervading the Heidelberg, which one finds only at rare intervals in the Westminster.

In the form also of its questions and answers, as well as in its contents, the Westminster reveals its didactic and theoretical character. "It is," says Dr. Nevin, "an admirable compend of metaphysical divinity after its own order and kind; but all impersonal and ideal. A description of Christianity in the abstract more than the felt appropriation of it in any way as a living and present fact. In the Heidelberg, on the contrary, question and answer move from the very start in the actual bosom of the new life of grace itself, and involve all along the practical acknowledgment of the great facts of the Christian salvation in the form of experimental, personal faith. All is so construed as to hold continually, not only in the element of personal experience, but in the element of such experience advanced to the consciousness and sense of a true personal interest in the salvation of Jesus Christ."

We may say, in conclusion, that the three Catechisms under comparison are Christian classics, a rich and ripe product of Protestant Christianity in its different types and groups. They set forth the salient truths of evangelical religion in its different aspects. In their theology, they are children of their age; they belong to the sixteenth, and not to the nineteenth, century. Not one of them anticipates the theological positions of our day. Each has its own merits and defects. In brevity and simplicity, Luther's Smaller Catechism is unexcelled; in its plan of arrangement, in its blending of the experimental and the theological, of the personal and the biblical, of the mystical and the practical, of the devotional and the didactic, the Heidelberg is a masterpiece; in the brevity and clearness

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of its questions and answers, in its fidelity to the Scriptures, in its dignified and yet unaffected language, in its preciseness and terseness, and in its high ethical ideal, the Westminster is unsurpassed. Yet the three Catechisms are human productions, and not final and infallible statements of divine truth. The time may come when the Christian consciousness of the twentieth century will demand a new formulation of faith, conforming to the modern conception of the Bible, of Christ, and of salvation. The heavenly treasure must always be preserved in earthen vessels. The vessels grow old and wear out, but the heavenly treasure abideth forever.

LANCASTER, PA.

## VI.

### A SYMPOSIUM ON THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.<sup>1</sup>

A. E. TRUXAL.

The members of the Reformed Church may justly feel proud of their Confession of Faith. Of the scores of Confessions produced in the sixteenth century the Heidelberg Catechism unquestionably became the most popular. "It was translated into all the European and many Asiatic languages." It has been more widely circulated and used than any one of the others. Its authors wrought better than they knew. They meant to meet the requirements of the Reformed branch of Protestantism of their country in their day, but their production commended itself also to the Reformed Church of other lands, not only in that age but for centuries to come.

But the question now at the end of 350 years arises whether or not it has fulfilled its mission. A considerable number of ministers and intelligent laymen of the Church are no longer able to accept all of the theological positions of the Catechism. For example, some do not believe that the doctrine of total depravity and of the atonement as presented in the Catechism can be justified by the teaching of the Gospel. Other difficulties appear to other minds. Revision would not remove the objections, as the underlying principles would necessarily remain the same. Ought the Church to form a new Confes-

<sup>1</sup> These brief articles were prepared, at the request of the editor, by a group of clergymen of the Reformed Church. They represent the eastern and western sections of the Church, and the progressive and conservative tendencies. They discuss the question, "Is the Heidelberg Catechism adequate to the needs of today as a Confession of Faith, and as a Catechetical Manual, or do we need a new Catechism?"

sion? I answer emphatically no. No new Confession could be produced that would be as generally acceptable to the Church as a whole as the Heidelberg Catechism. This is not an age for the creation of confessions. Let the Heidelberg Catechism remain as the Confession of Faith for the Reformed Church and as a monument to the faith and wisdom of those who originally formulated it.

But as a book for the instruction of the young it is no longer satisfactory. The presumption is against it. It cannot be expected that a textbook prepared 350 years ago when the conditions in church, state and social life were entirely different from those of the present would meet the requirements of our day. And as a matter of fact by a forty years' experience in catechization I have found it very unsatisfactory for the purpose. It is not in harmony with the pedagogical practices of the day; its questions and answers are too difficult for children of 12 to 15 years of age; the subject matter is too theological and doctrinal; and deals with too many questions that are at present in dispute in the theological world. As a confession of faith it can be accepted by almost every one as setting forth the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel. But when it comes to teaching it the instructor must enter into particulars, and then he will find himself confronted by the doctrinal objections (if he has any) in their full force. Speaking for myself, I do not believe that any one is morally corrupt from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head, unless he has brought himself into such a condition by a life of depravity. From the attitude and acts of Jesus towards children and from my knowledge of childhood I believe that there is an element of goodness in every one born into this world. If such were not the case there would be no basis, no *Anknuepfungspunkt*, for religious instruction, unless the child were regenerated in baptism or in some other way, which I do not believe to be the case. Or, the child might live in a state of depravity until regenerated at the age of maturity through what is popularly known as conversion. That is a

position I cannot accept. Yet there stand the question and answer of number 8 in the Catechism. This and other particulars perplex me in teaching the young with the Heidelberg Catechism as a textbook.

May not all of these objections be obviated by a simplified form of the Catechism? Evidently not, for such editions by different persons have been published at different times, but none has proven satisfactory. I have been using one such for years, but it does not meet the requirements as I see them.

What we, in my opinion, need is an entirely new book; formulated according to the principles of modern pedagogy; treating of faith and personal piety, and of the Christian life, its duties and privileges, its hopes and pleasures; setting forth the Christian's obligations to the church, to missions, to society in general and the social affairs of life in particular. Let the book be divided into three parts; the first part adapted to the needs of a primary class, the second part to those of an intermediate class, and the third part to those of an advanced class; and in the preparation of it the capacities and needs of boys and girls from 10 to 15 years of age must be kept strictly in mind.

This, then, is my answer to the questions that have been raised:

1. Let the Heidelberg Catechism stand, unrevised, as the Confession of Faith for the Reformed Church in the United States.

2. Let it, however, be discontinued as a book of instruction for the young, as in my opinion it is no longer suitable for the purpose.

3. Let a new book be prepared in harmony with the general spirit and life of the Church of the present day.

MEYERSDALE, PA.

(2)

S. R. WAGNER.

"We cannot sacrifice experience to the requirements of a system," says Henri Bergson in his *Creative Evolution*. The Heidelberg Catechism was not the ripe fruit of experience but an emergency book to meet the requirements of the system of thought that established Protestantism. As such it was a most worthy publication. As such it has had a splendid history. As a key to the theology of the Reformation it is splendid—especially of the Reformed type of theology. As a handbook to perpetuate the history of sixteenth century theology it has had a unique history. As a monument it should be preserved, not changing one jot or tittle.

But the Protestantism of the Reformation is no longer with us. We have different work to-day. Our ecclesiastical mission to-day is not to show the differences between the Roman Catholic and Protestant faith and then build up on the points of difference. A larger experience and the lapse of three and one half centuries have made many changes in the dominant notes of the Christian life. The Heidelberg Catechism does not adequately represent the theology of the Reformed Church to-day. A new statement of our position would eliminate many things and add many others. But even if the Catechism were to be conceded as an adequate expression of our position to-day, even then it is very questionable whether in preparing for confirmation the youthful mind should be asked to adopt a scheme of theology produced as an emergency in an age of strife. At the age when confirmation usually takes place, questions other than theological are uppermost. Of course there are other questions and answers, and good ones too, in the latter part of the book, but the approach to them is along an uncertain way.

The adolescent mind calls for light on questions of conduct, sin, temptation, forgiveness, worship, social and vocational

duties and all the questions of *life*, and it was Jesus himself who said that he came to give *life* and abundantly. It is important that the right material be taught but it is even more important that the right direction and impulse be given. And the material and direction must be adapted to age and circumstances. We do not teach advanced mathematics in the elementary grades of our public schools. We do not expect the same results from the dull and the alert. Likewise it is scarcely good pedagogical form to try to develop the innocent children with speculative thought that is baffling to adult minds even after long years of studying the questions involved.

The Heidelberg Catechism is built upon the theory of a fiat creation, the original perfection of a first pair, the fall of man, total depravity, plenary inspiration, a sacrificial atonement, physical resurrection, etc., and these subjects are to say the least debatable, and therefore not proper material to teach with certainty to persons who expect from us light on things surely believed and on things essential.

The efficiency of the Catechism as an adequate textbook for preparation for confirmation and the Christian life may be measured somewhat by the use that is made of it after confirmation. Does it remain a book which is used for meditation and inspiration by the new church member? In most cases in my experience the best that can be said of it is that it is put with the books of the household and kept for the next child when about to be confirmed. It does not find a place in the hearts and minds and daily life of the people. Perhaps it did in the time of its publication, but it does not now. Nor does the preacher often use it as a basis for his preaching or pastoral work. Why? Because it does not meet present-day needs.

In my twelve years as an active pastor I have been called to minister hundreds of times in the sick room. I never think of taking the Catechism to read, to give comfort and cheer. I have never been asked to use it. It has seldom been referred to in any way, by any one, while under the bonds of affliction. In the many times that I have had to minister in the house of

mourning the experience has been similar. When men want light on the questions of personal temptations, on vocational, social and dogmatic problems, do they turn to the Catechism? The only place where the book in question figures large is in the class preparing for confirmation, and I believe it is used there not so much because of the feeling of its fitness as because of its requirement and the absence of anything to take its place. And in such classes as a rule much help is derived from the supplementary material to be found in any of the several editions.

The Reformed Church to-day certainly needs a new literature—a literature stripped of its Nicene and Mediæval accumulations, in which the pure and simple gospel of Jesus is supreme.

READING, PA.

(3)

J. M. G. DARMS.

The Heidelberg Catechism needs not to beg for champions in our Reformed Church. We plainly feel that in its possession we have a priceless treasure and a glorious heritage. We fairly love this precious book and exposition of the faith of our fathers, not only because we have drawn so heavily upon it, in the 350 years just passed, for the "expression of distinctive denominational teaching," or because it has spoken so eloquently and forcefully of that immeasurably deeper and worthier book, our *Biblos*; but because it has contributed so largely to *our* faith and religious life. More than we know in our denominational life, moral philosophy and theological thinking, do we owe directly or indirectly to the influence of the Heidelberg Catechism. If we may use this expression, the pen and the mind of the framers of that precious book were like the "key" on the wireless telegraph, attuned and tensioned to catch and transmit the wave of the dominant,

current truths of the "Progressives" of that age, securely house the message and with accuracy again give it to the world of inquirers. We have been the inquirers and have adequately understood its message. *Our* Catechism is the peer among the four great catechisms of the world, viz.: Lutheran, Anglican and Westminster. Through the possession and impression of the Heidelberg, we have been enabled to continue, what is dear to the heart of every member of the Reformed Church, the *educational* element in our religious instruction. Our people have been indoctrinated and fortified by the *constructive* teachings of the Catechism, which lent strength, clarity and permanency to their religious convictions and joy and comfort to their religious lives. There is something of intellectuality and spirituality in our faith, that we can trace directly to the influence and moulding property of our Catechism. Moreover, through the Catechism, we have been inducted into the Word of God, for the Gibraltar, upon which these our denominational and theological fortifications stand, is the *Word of God*. The framers of our Catechism were very careful to impress us with the "authenticity" and "Biblical verifications" of their teaching, by placing the *steel bands* of appropriate Bible passages around every question and answer. Of course, their philosophy, peculiar theological views and their individuality were also expressed in their production. No one engaged in such constructive work of thought, theological, philosophical or pedagogical, can remain entirely impartial without throwing his personality, and with his personality, his individual views and convictions, into the production. It might be more *scientific* to refrain from doing so, but in matters religious, where the *heart* is so closely bound up with the *head*, spirituality with intellectuality, revelation with *personality*, it is almost impossible to do otherwise. Their production is none the less *larger* than their personality because they did so. It is possible unconsciously to be a *redactor* and *instructor* at one and the same time.

But there is, in our humble judgment, one thought, which

even the framers of our Catechism never entertained, and that is: That *Truth* in its last development had been gathered in and incorporated in their production as the *finished religious product of the ages*. The Heidelberg Catechism, however much it may be thought so in some quarters, is not to be accepted as the *last word in the confessions of religion in the world*. There may be none more beautiful and comprehensive, but that is not saying that the Heidelberger is the be-all and end-all of expressions of religious belief. Not even the fathers thought thus. Their very humility and integrity of purpose, as well as their intellectual grasp of the *vastness* of things spiritual, militates against this, which would otherwise be a stupendous claim. The *truth* in all its force and fullness, in its completeness and comprehensiveness, is *in Jesus*, and Jesus was the Son of God in a unique sense. His was a *teaching plus a personality*. He never intended Christianity to be a mere dogma, however rock-ribbed and perfect this may be. It was more than theology, philosophy and pedagogy which he gave to the world. Jesus revealed and reflected *God* to the world. The framers of the Catechism had a comprehensive vision of the Christ and conception of the truth as it is in Jesus. Their burning passion was to see their children and their children's children possessed of the only comfort in life and in death, but their vision and conception and passion was no *finality*.

The truth is larger than the conception of one man's mind of the minds of a coterie of men and larger too than the conception of any one church or denomination. Others see and think and feel as did our fathers. There is a certain consecutiveness in thinking the thoughts of the master minds of the world after them, but there is always room too for *individuality* and *originality* of thought. The *truth* is, in our opinion, fully expressed and in a finished form in *Jesus*, in His teaching *and* personality; but the interpretation and application of the truth will naturally be relative, made to apply to and fit adequately the needs and the conditions of every

age. No age has ever *exhausted*, nor will our's exhaust the search for the truth. The admonition of the Master, *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and these are they, which testify of Me*, John 5:39, continues in force until there is no mind to think and search any more in the earth. It is directed to *us*. Here not the Catechism, but the whole Word of Law and Prophecy and Gospel is meant, the whole Book of God.

Every age has its mentality and spirituality; every truth its appeal to the intellect and the heart. But in its development it is built like one of our modern buildings, *tier upon tier*. Not a single one of these lower tiers can be excluded and eliminated if the safety of the building is not to be threatened, or if it is to retain its firmness and attain its height. We must not be slow in appreciating either the progress or the limitations of this or of a previous age. For more than *pious reasons* and the "veneration of our venerability," should we value our Heidelberg Catechism. Its substance, its intrinsic value, is its real worth. It stands or falls on its *merits* and not on its *historicity*. We must recognize that. But we must not permit ourselves to become satisfied "without a reason and conviction," as little as we should become oblivious to the imperative needs of our times to help our people secure "a reason for the hope, that is in them."

All this leads us to say:

1. We should not discard, but retain our Heidelberg Catechism as a Confession of Faith of the Reformed Church.

2. We should have a perpetual *re-vision* and *re-study* of the teachings of our Catechism and rightly understand, interpret and emphasize the teachings of our fathers. There is such a deplorable lack of effort on the part of many, to give to the Catechumens a thorough, systematic instruction in the Christian verities. For the sake of brevity, succinctness and comprehensiveness which sometimes spells mental inertia if it does not spell something worse, many of the rich treasures of our Reformed teaching remain buried and unknown and those

that are taught are but lightly touched and not exhaustively taught. Our age will need not less but more indoctrination of vital truths, in order to attain to a larger degree of Christian faith and denominational efficiency.

3. Following the lead of our Catechism and true to its genius, let us find our way back to "our Bible." Let us search its depths for pearls of great price, for vital truths, as yet undiscovered, though read and believed with sincerity and yet lacking the *emphasis*, which should be given to them, to make them a stimulant to our religious lives and have them meet the "social needs of our times," which are crying to Heaven for attention and correction. To these truths in the Holy Bible, there is no limit, neither to their adequacy or efficiency. Every age has only scratched the surface of this soil. No generation has exhausted, nor will we exhaust, the rich treasures of the Bible.

4. Let us with more industry and reverence study the *personality of Jesus*, enthrone Him in our hearts and lives and give Him his rightful place in the Kingdom of God in the earth. Whilst we reverently think the thoughts of our fathers after them, we must not for a moment let any dogmatic teaching (though the Heidelberg is more than that), however beautiful and impelling, take the place of the *Living Christ*. Religion is not only a dogma; it is *life*. And as we study the life of the Christ, we set our mind to work, under the direction of modern (not medieval) philosophy, to grasp "the truth as it is in Jesus," we will find many added truths *trickle* down through our mind and take firm root in our heart and become fixed expressions in our religious convictions. The Kingdom of God is of a growing nature and the Kingdom thoughts are uppermost in our minds. The social aspect of our modern civilization and Christian life needs attention in these days of social unrest. Our religious convictions must have "*iron in the blood*" in order to withstand the assaults and meet the needs of our materialistic age.

Sin must be crucified and conditions rectified. We must

show our people a way out of the wilderness and into a sweeter and larger life of worship and service. This is our challenge.

5. Whilst we reverence our Catechism and the rich thoughts of our fathers, let us not discourage, but rather encourage, individual thought and personal study of the vital truths of Christianity, but employ the *sifting process* in their acceptance and extreme *caution* in their recommendation and abundant *wisdom* in their documentary expression. We need discard nothing, we may add much in a statement of belief. We should see to it that it does not sacrifice anything vital for the sake of being concise; that it is lucid enough to be understood by any ordinary mind; that it embodies the essentials of that first grand confession of Christianity of Peter: Thou art the Christ, including all that he meant in saying that; that it be in such a practical form as to be of real service and need not pass through the experimental stage or find its touchstone first.

With the Christ as the centre, the Kingdom of God as the circumference, we will have a wide sphere to pursue our labors and studies. And if we are not only critical but actuated by the same motives as our fathers, we will adopt as a part of our motto: The Christ, the entire Christ and nothing but the Christ; the *truth*, the whole *truth* and nothing but the *truth*. Doing this we will find the *tangents* going through the heart of that good old book we love so well, which has served us as a rich treasure store, for upwards of 350 years, and we will find these stretching forth like the vital tendrils of the plant for a *hold upon God* himself, bringing *Him* so close to us that though owning His Absolute Sovereignty, over men and affairs, which the Heidelberger constantly upholds; yet we become conscious of His *presence*, convinced of His *leadership* and assured of His undying *love*.

Thus we will retain reverence for the faith and labors of our fathers of yesterday; have bread for our people of to-day and a satisfying spiritual food for our children of tomorrow. Whilst we are praying: Thy Kingdom come, all along the far-

flung battle-line of 300,000 earnest champions of the truth in the Reformed Church, the standard of our Reformed faith is displayed and we are privileged to see the *Glory of the Lord* filling our houses of worship, feel the joy unspeakable gladdening our hearts and feel the thrill of "world conquest" to which we also are called and which work of "bringing men to God," we will pursue with unabated zeal and renewed vigor as a memorial to our fathers and an expression of the effectiveness of the faith, we have thus expressed. We frame these lines to express our feeling, as a sort of Processional:

One God, one Christ, one Truth alone,  
 One passion of our heart we own:  
 That throughout earth God's will be done,  
 In every heart His Kingdom come.  
 Our fathers' God, be with us yet!  
 Lest we forget, lest we forget.

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

(4)

F. C. NAU.

Is the Heidelberg Catechism adequate theologically and pedagogically for the Church of to-day? The writer does not think that it is. It may have been adequate to the religious needs of the sixteenth century. In fact, it contains the very best theological conceptions of the Reformation period. It is the finest distillation from the theological and ecclesiastical ferment of that great time. And for 350 years the catechism has rendered a signal service to the Church, because it set forth a christological religion, it emphasized the all-sufficient grace of God, it helped to conserve the idea of an educational religion, and it showed that personal knowledge of doctrine and personal heart-religion belong together. But its statement of doctrine and its analysis of truth belong to the sixteenth century. During the past 350 years floods of new light have been poured upon the religious world, and no theological book of

350 years ago can fully satisfy the religious consciousness of our time. Revelation is progressive. The capacity for receiving truth has expanded. A new manual for religious instruction is therefore needed. Christian doctrines should be restated.

1. Instead of emphasizing a rigid, logical, historical plan of salvation, we should hold up religion as the transforming, regenerating, fruit-bearing life of God in the soul of man.

2. Instead of "original sin" we should speak of heredity. But personal responsibility for individual sin must always stand out prominently. "Total depravity should be applied only to the degenerates of the race." Jesus did not begin His teachings with the fall of Adam.

3. The Catechism bases its scheme of redemption on the proposition that God's justice must be satisfied, that His anger must be appeased. The truth of redemption, however, is rooted in the love of God. God's *love* must be satisfied. Instead of the penal suffering and death of Christ as a substitute for the sinner, the great voluntary self-sacrifice of Christ should be made fundamental. John 3:16 and the "Parable of the Prodigal Son" are the basic passages for the truth of redemption, and not the juridic and Judaistic arguments in some of Paul's epistles and in Hebrews.

4. The eschatology of the catechism is not sufficiently spiritual. The resurrection of man should be treated in the light of Christ's statement: "I am the resurrection and the life." The second coming should not be treated so much as a coming event, but as an ethical and spiritual process which will eventuate sometime in the complete triumph of spiritual personality over the animal and the material, when Christ will be all in all.

5. Christ's teachings about the "Kingdom of God" are not given large enough room in the Catechism. This age demands a true interpretation of the social ideals of Jesus. The Church must be made to understand the true doctrine of the Kingdom of God, or she will continue to be baffled by the great social

movements of our time. She needs sound doctrine on Christian brotherhood, Christian service, and Christian missions.

6. The Catechism does not tell us what the Bible is. A false conception of the Bible has been a chief cause of controversy, heresy, bigotry, sectarianism and infidelity. It is high time for the Church to teach her children that the Bible is the progressive revelation of God, through human experience, in various forms of literature, during a period of 1,600 years, culminating in Christ the perfect revelation. It is the world's supreme religious book.

These and other things convince the writer that our Catechism does not meet the requirements of the Church to-day.

Pedagogically the book is more satisfactory than theologically. But modern pedagogy and psychology would demand a better book for the religious instruction of our youth. The Catechism is too heavy for the untrained mind. The scholastic argument for the satisfaction theory can not be followed by the youthful mind, nor by many an adult mind. The sentences are too involved. The definitions are often couched in theological and philosophical language. Words like co-eternal, co-equal and God-head are difficult. In some respects it has simplicity, but in general it lacks simplicity. A new Catechism should be characterized by the utmost simplicity of reasoning and expression. A new manual for moral and religious instruction should retain the catechetical method, that of question and answer. The teaching method of Socrates and Jesus have not been superseded by any methods of modern pedagogy. Jesus taught by asking questions and drawing out what was in the minds of his disciples. The questions should proceed in logical order, each growing out of the preceding one, and all subordinate to but illuminating of one central idea. It should have the personal element and fervor of the old. The new manual should be prepared by devout scholars, who will make it an expression of their deepest religious experience.

READING, PA.

(5)

A. O. REITER.

Under this general question, two subordinate questions have been assigned to me for discussion in this issue of the REVIEW, (1) Is the Heidelberg Catechism pedagogically adequate? (2) Is the Heidelberg Catechism theologically adequate?

I. Our answer to the first of these questions will, of course, be largely determined by our attitude toward the "new psychology" and "modern pedagogy" concerning which we have heard so much within the past twenty years. If it be true that "interest" is the key to all education, if the only gateway to that interest is the child's instinct for play, if dogmatism is "a sin against the mind," and the path of least resistance the only right way, if the only real knowledge is that which the learner first acquires through experience and then formulates for himself: then, certainly the Heidelberg Catechism, both in form and in substance is inadequate as an instrument of education. But there are new psychologies and new psychologies, new pedagogies and new pedagogies, at least fifty-seven varieties, and no greater agreement among them than between the many theories of socialism. Perhaps when the newest psychology is written and the most modern pedagogy formulated there may be found room even for the *a priori* and the categorical imperative and the dogma.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

For three hundred and fifty years pastors in the Reformed Church have used this text-book heedless as to whether it was as interesting as a fairy-story or not. The play instinct has been entirely ignored. Regardless of the path of least resistance, the formulas of the catechism have been presented as so many dogmas the catechumen should store up in memory, that he might know "what to believe and how to live." That the language of the catechism is, in form, largely empirical by no means signifies that the corresponding experience of the cate-

chumen was ever more than potential. Our catechetical method has never aimed to lead the child through experience to his own formulation of the truth of that experience, but rather by giving the truths of the experience of the race to direct the learner that he may know what kind of experience to seek and where to seek it. Some millions of catechumens have studied this catechism, many of them memorizing it from cover to cover, and the world has had the benefit of the lives and labors of strong, Christian men and women, possessed of a broad and comprehensive view of God and this relation to man, of deep and lasting religious experience and conviction. Bold indeed is he who will assert that the law of cause and effect has had nothing to do with this, that we have had strong Christians in spite of the catechism with its dogmas and its anti-pedagogical, anti-psychological method. Some thousands of boys and girls within the past year have learned to say: "I with body and soul both in life and in death, belong, not to myself but to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ" and have experienced within their hearts an answering throb of assent to the ancient dogma. And some who have studied modern science, modern philosophy and the richest treasures of literature have stumbled upon the 26th question and answer and have marvelled that a man of the sixteenth century could, in so few words, and in such perfect poetic form, express so much of the best that the science and philosophy of the twentieth century have tried to say, so much of man's fundamental faith that never grows old. Perhaps, after all, there is wisdom, even pedagogic wisdom in the practice of gathering together in concise formulas the best the race has experienced and in giving these formulas to our children as a framework for their spiritual lives. Certain it is, that after a generation of Froebelian theory, wrested from its sociological purpose into an educational cult in the kindergarten, of Herbartian theory in the public schools, of eclecticism and specialization in colleges and universities, of manifold inventions, to make work into play, not in generations has the world been so ill satisfied

with the results obtained in the schools as it is to-day. Perhaps the Heidelberg Catechism, with its inflexible dogmas, and the despised memoriter methods of other days have something to teach us even about modern pedagogy. Dean Smith, of the University of Pennsylvania, in a recent address said that the great lesson the college youth of to-day need to learn is that "*they must.*" However destructive of the play instinct, however out of harmony with the educational theory of interest, however dogmatic and anti-empirical such a maxim may be, it is what we need not only in the college, but in the public school and Sunday-school as well. As of old, every one must *work out*, not play out, his own salvation. This attitude of authority, this demand for obedience, this insistence on personal responsibility, the Catechism and the practice of catechization have preserved for us.

But is there no room for improvement? Is the Heidelberg Catechism in substance, as well as in form, adequate to the pedagogical needs of the twentieth century? That is an entirely different question, and we have no hesitancy in answering, no. Rich in truth, beautiful in form, dear to the hearts of many, are many of its questions and answers. But the book as a whole is of the sixteenth century and looks at the great problems of the religious life from the sixteenth century point of view. Truth is ever unchangeable, and God is "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." Man is man, sin is sin, and salvation is salvation, to-day as four centuries ago. But we are living in a new age and our apprehension of truth demands a new statement, a new formulation of fundamental truths. The great facts about numbers and their relations are exactly what they were in the days of Bruno. Three times seven is twenty-one, as it was when Columbus learned the multiplication table. The relation of the hypotenuse to the base and altitude is just what it was, and the "rule of three" has not changed since the days when Calvin ruled the city of Geneva with iron hand. But we should ridicule the idea of trying to use in our public schools a translation of a German arithmetic

published in the city of Heidelberg in 1563, even though it bore on its title page the names of the greatest mathematicians of their day, and just as little should we be content to continue to use a sixteenth century catechism as a text-book for religious instruction. The facts remain the same but the emphasis has shifted. While large areas of religious experience developed in our lives since the days of Ursinus are of such inestimable value that we rob our children when we fail to include them in our manual of instruction.

II. The question, is the Heidelberg catechism theologically adequate? has already been answered in part. Theology is our formal statement of the truth we apprehend about God and our relation to Him. No sixteenth century statement of that truth could by any possibility be adequate for the full expression of a twentieth century experience. Nor is any statement we make to-day likely to be more than approximately adequate. Something of mystery there must ever be in dealing with these great themes. When a God of infinite wisdom, love and power condescends to reveal Himself and His will to a man of finite mind, something there must be which that finite mind cannot grasp, cannot formulate. Yet even finite minds may grow "into all truth" when led by the promised Paraclete. The twentieth century has something better, something more nearly adequate from a theological standpoint to say on the great fundamental truths of the spiritual life, than the sixteenth century could possibly have had. We owe it to those coming after us to put not only: "that which was from the beginning" but likewise, "that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled concerning the word of life," into that sum of highest truth which we intend to use in their religious instruction.

In this answer to the question I have assumed that the question is as to the theological adequacy of the Heidelberg catechism as a text-book for religious instruction and not as a confession of faith. Yet, unbidden, the other question will obtrude itself. In our church constitution, and in our rituals

for ordination the Heidelberg Catechism is set forth as a confessional standard to which theological professor, minister, elder and deacon are alike required to promise conformity. Is it theologically adequate for such use? My opinion is that it is not adequate, that it never will be adequate, and that it never was adequate as a confession of faith for anyone except Ursinus and Olevianus, and that one or both of them possibly had mental reservations. The dream of a *confessio fidei* to be "everywhere, always, and by all received" was an obsession of the prescientific, not to say unscientific mind, and has no rightful place in modern religious life or the modern church. The attempt to enforce a standard in either faith or practice is ever fatal to the peace of the church and destructive of all true Christian progress, because it subverts both the spirit and life of the Christ himself—the spirit of freedom the life of loving service. It is because we of the Reformed Church have externally and formally, though not at all in reality and in practice, regarded the Heidelberg Catechism as a confession of faith, that we have not been able down to the present time to formulate a better manual of instruction for catechumens. In the present unsettled condition of theological thought, the preparation of a statement, theologically adequate as a confession of faith for anyone except the maker of it, is absolutely out of the question. But we have many men as capable of preparing a text-book for religious instruction for the children of the twentieth century as were Ursinus and Olevianus to do the same work for their generation. But this will not be done until we do away with the dishonest pretense of conformity to any standard save that which the Holy Spirit rears in each one's own heart.

The Heidelberg Catechism in the hands of an educated ministry, breathing that air of freedom in the truth the Reformed Church has ever prized, though formally denying it, has been blessed of God in wondrous degree. Millions by its use have been led step by step to Christ and made to live in them. That it has not lost its power and usefulness is not, however, due,

either to its form or contents, but rather to the fact that those using it have supplemented its formulas with the whole range of their own experience in the Christian life. This catechism should not be revised. In its historic unity it ought to stand as a monument of what God led man to do for His glory in the sixteenth century of the Christian era. As such it is the richest distinctive possession of the Reformed Church, and throughout the ages it will be increasingly prized.

The need of the present day is a new manual of instruction catechetical in method, dogmatic in form, pedagogically and theologically adequate to the demands of our times. Its aim should not be to interest the child by substituting candy for meat. It need not appeal to the play instinct any more than did the catechism of our fathers. A clear and forceful presentation of the truth, concise, and as beautiful as it is possible to make it, appealing to all that is deepest, noblest, and most heroic in the human soul, such a text-book we need. It should contain, in addition to all the gathered treasures of the religious experiences of men before the Reformation, those greater riches of truth and wisdom which the ever-living Spirit hath in these last days revealed in us.

POTTSVILLE, PA.

( 6 )

FREDERICK C. SEITZ.

The Heidelberg Catechism as a work of the sixteenth century has our highest admiration. From the viewpoint of that age, it has Scripture as its basis, it is logical in its conception and arrangement and clear in its statements. For any age or people that looks upon religion as law, and holds that the foundation of the Christian religion is the appeasing of an angry God, the Heidelberg Catechism will ever be a splendid and sufficient text-book to instruct the unchurched and the children of the church.

The religion of Jesus Christ is, however, not viewed in our day as law, nor do its adherents think of Christ as having paid any kind of a penalty which had in view the satisfaction of God. Religion is life, and in Jesus Christ we find the highest, noblest and fullest manifestation of that life. That Christ was crucified and died on the cross is a fact as well authenticated and as indisputably established as any other fact of history. Just as certainly as there was a Revolutionary War with Washington at the head of the troops of the colonies, or a Civil War with Lincoln as President of the United States, so certainly was Christ crucified. That is a fact, one of many in His life. Now the Heidelberg Catechism is built upon the assumption that all these facts, and especially the crucifixion, were necessary to satisfy the wrath of God and to pay the penalty for sin.

In our age the facts are accepted as readily and as fully as they ever were, but they are no longer viewed as penal in any sense. Religion is life. The Christian religion represents the highest kind of life. In Christ there was perfect life. And since love is the fundamental requisite of true life, all the facts of Christ's life reveal God's infinite love. The cross, therefore, represents the extremity to which love went to win men, and as we behold the cross, we see the greatest exhibition of love the world ever knew.

But now, what has all this to do with the Heidelberg Catechism? Well, any book that is false in its premise, cannot be satisfactory in its conclusions, nor can it ring true to the convictions of many honest men who believe most heartily in the catechetical method.

True, the catechism is Christological. But it is the Christology of Paul interpreted by the mind of the sixteenth century. Certainly Christ should ever be central. But in our day the catechist wants Christ to interpret himself for us, and not Paul, much less the mind of 350 years ago.

Then, too, the Heidelberg Catechism as a text-book is simply impossible. And this is not because the pastors have weak-

ened in their high regard for the catechetical method. Every pastor has one class, and many have two catechetical classes. As a teacher, the pastor is as eager to teach Christ to the children as were any men of any age. But the active pastor does not have the time, even if he had the ability, to give a course of training in mediæval philosophy and the controversies of the sixteenth century, in order that the catechism may be understood. Consequently he finds it necessary to omit much that is in the catechism, and add more that is not in. It was my privilege as well as my pleasure to be present when an earnest and able catechist, one of the most faithful in our Church, demonstrated the use of the blackboard in teaching the catechism. It was admirably done, and I wish that my own child might sit at his feet and learn of him. But the Heidelberg Catechism was really not taught. Many of the questions were omitted; doctrine was entirely absent, and vital, ethical religion was set forth in all its beauty, glory and power. To my mind, this was a fine exemplification of the fact that the Heidelberg Catechism as a text-book for our day is an impossibility. And I am persuaded that the great majority of pastors, even while the catechumens have the catechism in their possession, do not use it in any large measure as a text-book. There are some things in it that they love to teach, but there are a great many things not in it that they feel the children must know.

Doctrine should have very little place in the life and mind of children. And at any rate doctrine is by no means the starting point. It is the conclusion rather than the premise. And since the Heidelberg Catechism has doctrine as its prevailing purpose, and, further, since it is the one authorized text-book of our Church, the pastors are asked to give the conclusions before the children understand the facts upon which the conclusions are necessarily based. We are asked to indoctrinate rather than to invigorate. Pedagogically this is all wrong.

Take the Sermon on the Mount, for example, and teach it

thoroughly and understandingly to the children and they will be far better fitted for life than they will be if even they are able to recite from memory every one of the 129 questions and answers in the catechism. A well wrought out life of Christ is in my mind a better text-book than our present authorized and only standard. We are pretending to teach a book that the majority of the pastors, I dare say, are not teaching at all or only in small portions. And though some men think they are teaching the catechism, they unconsciously drift away from it time and time again because they feel that it is inadequate as a present-day text-book.

My conclusion is, not that we need a revision of the Heidelberg Catechism, but that we need an entirely new structure. The viewpoint needs to be modern, and the structure pedagogically possible. The one thing that needs to be retained is that Christ be the center and heart of the whole structure. For Christ is not only central in doctrine, but he is also central in life.

ALLENTOWN, PA.

(7)

J. H. BOMBERGER.

This contribution to this symposium might be summarized as follows: We need a new catechism. The Heidelberg Catechism is pedagogically inadequate. For a very large number of our ministers and laymen it is still theologically adequate. No doubt there are others whose opinions are no longer in close accord with it. Theoretically this divergence is radical. Practically—so far as the actual work of the kingdom is concerned—these men of variant view are apparently in entire harmony. Continued earnest concentration upon the great task of bringing the evangel of the saving Christ to sin-submerged men will continue to result in the furtherance of the kingdom, and, incidentally, the question of theological adjustment will take care of itself. It is doubtful if any attempt at peda-

gological reconstruction could be carried through at present without involving a discussion of the question of theological divergencies. Therefore it would seem expedient to postpone all catechism reconstruction to a more convenient season; or until time's readjustments shall have minimized the danger of precipitating what could easily become an acrimonious (if we are the true sons of our sires) and well-nigh hopeless theological controversy.

*This hands-off policy is advocated, not because the Heidelberg Catechism is sacrosanct. It is not.*

There is a tradition current that the Reformed Church apotheosizes its standard. Reluctance to endorse the proposal to prepare a new catechism is not grounded upon undue veneration for the symbol itself. Bibliolatry is as truly idolatry as is Mariolatry. And the worship of a standard has even less warrant. The revised version of the St. James translation of the Bible has come into wide use. Why should there not be a revision of the catechism? Fond associations should not be permitted to stand in the way. Ultra conservatism clinging to certain expressions and phrases should not block any real improvement. In writing of the New Intermediate Catechism, the approval of which by their General Assembly last year he vigorously condemns, a loyal presbyter of the Presbyterian Church declares that "a more suitable catechism than the Shorter Catechism never has been, and probably never can be, prepared."

Many of our Lutheran friends feel that way about their Catechism. And no doubt many of our own church could echo those words with application to the book that Ursinus and Olevianus wrote. But it is not because of an inclination to canonize the catechism that the writer would urge "hands off."

*Nor is it because the Heidelberg Catechism is pedagogically satisfactory in all respects. It is not.*

This is unavoidably the case because of the divergence between the purpose in view in its original preparation, and the use with which it is most prominently associated in our minds to-day.

It was prepared primarily as a carefully wrought-out statement of the Bible plan of salvation for adults in a day when theological dialectics was as the breath of life for multitudes.

Our thought of it to-day—and our most frequent use of it—is not merely as the Biblical norm by which we weigh and test orthodoxy and correct theological variations, but as a text-book for the instruction of the young—ranging in age from ten to fifteen years—in religious truth.

Used in this way there are probably already as many "new" catechisms—revised, abbreviated, detechnicalized—as there are earnest and successful catechists. A personal canvass among a number of pastors has confirmed the opinion as to the correctness of this statement. Why not then, by a comparative study of these church-wide individual, pedagogical reconstructions of the catechism establish a consensus as to what is generally desirable in re-phrasing and re-arrangement, and thus obviate any further necessity for individual revision? This would be little more than setting the seal of ecclesiastical endorsement upon some simplified and abbreviated form of the Heidelberg Catechism similar to the four or five modified forms which have been prepared and published by individual ministers and which are now in somewhat general use. This would cover the ground contemplated by the Presbyterian Intermediate Catechism referred to above, which was prepared under the definite instruction to "cover the system of faith and practice held by the Presbyterian Church, and taught in the Holy Scriptures," and that it be "simpler in language than the Shorter Catechism."

If the proposed revision of our catechism could be held down to this it is not only unobjectionable but desirable. The writer does not believe that it would.

*The difficulty emerges just here. In view of the excessive fluidity of current theological opinion at present any general and official attempt at pedagogical revision would almost inevitably precipitate a flood of theological controversy. This would, as was the case aforetime, divert the Church from the*

lines of religious activity upon which representatives of the different theological trends are now so happily and harmoniously concentrating. It is probable that there is not one of General Synods boards which does include enough shades of theological opinion to turn that harmony into strident discord if transferred from our oneness in earnest world-winning activity to our many-ness in theological dialectics.

Let all the restive souls with itching digits who sit in the seats of the controversially speculative pause and consider before they pen or publish aught which shall tend to divert us from these lines of practical effort along which we are now so smoothly working, and in the prosecution of which, for so long, we were woefully lacking because of the dissipation of our denominational energies in our internecine Thirty Years' War. The writer's cradle was rocked amid the din of battle. He hopes to escape the experience of going to his grave, when that time comes, to the accompaniment of an ecclesiastical Marseillaise.

In Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregationalist, and other communions, there are, to-day, loyal followers of Christ working together in close fraternalism and with richly blessed endeavor, whose theological positions are well known to be widely divergent. Conservative and radical, in opinion, are equally orthodox in their zeal for the progress of Christ's kingdom so long as no green banner of controversial challenge proclaims a Jihad. Fortunately heterodoxy, for many a man, is, like Boston, merely a temporary "state of mind." Interest him intensely in real work for Christ and he will often "get over" it, forget it. But stop long enough to argue the question with him, and in a trice peaceful fellow-toilers will become bitter antagonists; the works close down, and the reign of the mob and the picket begins.

With divergencies represented on the one wing by the man who believes that God made Adam of dust, and, on the other, by the one who holds to a genetic connection between man and the original form of life in the world; by him who stands

staunchly by the historicity of the Genesis narratives, and the one who looks upon much of the Old Testament story as a blend of myth and folklore; by the man who believes in the eternal preëxistence of Christ and the one who shades off into something close akin to Socinianism; by him who avows that the Bible is the Word of God, and the one looks upon that view, with a recent writer, as "the tottering heritage of devout but unscientific ages,"—with doctrinal chasms yawning as widely as these that man is sanguine indeed who hopes to be able to bridge them by formulating a new symbol—unless its limits are as contracted as those of a catalogue of titles.

Therefore, because it seems inevitable that what is begun, in this instance, pedagogically will resolve itself into a theological issue, it would appear to be the course of wisdom to bear the pedagogical ills we have than fly to others that we know of, from an extremely bitter and wretchedly costly denominational experience, only too well.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

(8)

C. B. SCHNEDER.

Among the many true and beautiful words which have been written in appreciation of the Heidelberg Catechism there are few to which our hearts and minds are more readily responsive than to the words found in the introduction to *The Heidelberg Catechism* by Rev. Alexander Smellie, M.A. After setting forth in some detail "the qualities which invest the Heidelberg Catechism with a supreme value," the writer adds, "But it has more positive claims to the attention and esteem of Christian men. From first to last it is pervaded by a beautiful spirit. It is the product of the heart as well as of the head. It is warm, spiritual, unctional, no less than exact and convincing. There are times when its utterances rise to a kind of heavenly pathos; there are other times when their rhythm clings to the memory like that of an exquisite

lyric. No one thinks of a catechism and a poem as having any affinity with each other—the singer would be indignant who should find his raptures spoken of in such a dubious connection; yet the Heidelberg Catechism, in some of its parts, has all the characteristics of prose poetry. The truths which it enunciates were loved by those who wrote them down, and they never thought it needful to conceal their love and feign only an intellectual interest in their theme. Their hearts overflowed into those questions and answers of theirs; and because they brought to their undertaking not only rare learning and judgment, but a passion of fervor and enthusiasm, they imparted to what they did a unique distinction, and they secured for it an irrepressible fame. Opie, according to Dr. John Brown, mixed his colors “with brains,” and so his pictures lived; but the books which are to laugh at the corrosive and destructive influences of time require in their composition something even better than brains—they must be tinctured and warmed with ruddy life-blood. The young German divines of three centuries ago understood the secret, and therefore we can linger over their sentences still, and find that they speak to us intimately and lovingly.”

To these words of praise and appreciation of the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism and of the catechism itself our hearts and minds leap with joyful and grateful response and approval, and yet, considerations of faithfulness to the teachings of the catechism and of loyalty to ever-unfolding truth, compel us to consider very carefully at this time of our Jubilee celebration, our doctrinal standard from all possible sides. In this way only can we be just to the authors, to our beloved catechism, and to ourselves, and thus make the most out of the Jubilee occasion. It is not conceivable that the authors themselves would be satisfied with anything less than this if they could mingle and take part with us in this celebration. For them we claim, and we think justly, that they were men who stood in the forefront, not only in theological learning, but also in the apprehension of the needs of their

times and in the application of the truth as it is in Jesus to those needs. Is it conceivable therefore that if they were living now, in the light of three and one half centuries of progress in theological thought and practical Christian living, they could stand where they stood at that time? May we not suppose rather, that, in spite of the honor which we at this time bestow upon them and their work, in our attempt at recognition of the great good the catechism has accomplished, they would express surprise, if not disappointment, that the Church has been and is so well content to put the new wine of our present-day apprehension of truth and its application to the practical needs of life, into the old bottles of several centuries ago? Surely all must agree that the great distinction in which we hold these men lies in the very fact that they were not content to do thus; that they, in giving us the Heidelberg Catechism, gave a new bottle into which they put the new wine of evangelical truth, old in itself, but newly apprehended and to be practically applied. That they did their work wisely we all know. Eternity alone can reveal its wonderful influence for good. That it is monumental in its results is freely acknowledged. And yet, much as the world appreciates their work, greatly as we honor it, may we not ask, as in imagination we call them to our side, would not the authors themselves urge us to faithful efforts to do for our day and generation just what they did for their day and generation? The urgency may not seem so great, nor the emergency so pressing as in the days of the Reformation, but who that reads the signs of our times and with vision attempts to interpret them, can deny that ours is an age of re-formation in civil, industrial, educational, social, and religious ideals? These ideals are impelling us toward realization in a quiet, peaceable, yet irresistible manner, and coming years may reveal that which we now but faintly see, namely, that ours in a wonderful way, is "an age on ages telling."

That we may go forward safely both for ourselves and those who succeed us, and to the glory of God, we must be true to

our heritage according to its best spirit. That best spirit as it pervades our catechism, may be interpreted as urging us to create a new bottle into which to put the present-day apprehension of truth in heart and mind, for doctrine and teaching and life, in the clearest and purest light of the advancing revelation of God.

In this way will we do proper honor to our time-honored doctrinal standard and its inspired authors, as the branch honors the vine, or the oak the acorn from which it sprang. Inspiration in this direction should be the richest and best fruit of the Jubilee celebration to the observance of which the whole Reformed Church has been called.

SHAMOKIN, PA.

( 9 )

C. E. CREITZ.

The persistence with which the question, *Do we need a new catechism*, is asked, is one of the best reasons for believing that there is a widespread feeling of such a need. When there is entire satisfaction with what one possesses, the question whether one does not need or want something else does not continually obtrude itself.

This feeling of need is no doubt often vague and indefinite. Just what kind of a catechism we would like to have is not very clear. This is shown by the number of private catechisms that have been prepared at various times, not one of which has gained any considerable number of adherents.

But while we may not be in the clear as to just what kind of a catechism we want, there seems to be a growing feeling that the Heidelberg Catechism is no longer an adequate or satisfactory statement of our beliefs, and that it does not furnish a satisfactory handbook or manual of instruction for the youth of our Church. In other words, that it is neither doctrinally nor pedagogically adequate to the needs of the twentieth century.

This feeling of inadequacy is coupled with the most profound veneration for the little book that for three centuries and a half has held its place as the symbol of faith and the manual of instruction in the Reformed Church, and has gained the respect of all, and the commendation of many of the denominations of Christendom. The celebrations of this Jubilee Year bear new and striking testimony to the affection for the Catechism on the part of those who have been instructed in it.

But in spite of all our attachment to the book, we can not get rid of the conviction that we need a new catechism; not a revised catechism. For the suggestion of laying mutilating hands on this venerable book is repugnant to the best feeling of the Church. The Heidelberg Catechism should remain untouched. *It was the flower, no doubt, of the best theological and ethical thinking of the Reformation. It was the finest expression in terms of intellect and of heart of that creative age. It belongs to the literature of power. It has in it something of the quality of deathlessness. It has perpetuated its life and influence in the Reformed and other churches for three hundred and fifty years, and by that very fact has demonstrated its ability and its right to live.*

But we are living in a new age. A bewildering number of new facts have been discovered since the Catechism was written, which clamor for admission into our organized thinking. New light has been shed on the Bible, on religious experience, on history, on education, on science, on literature. This new knowledge can not be ignored. The thinker must take it into account. Theology is thinking on religious things, the intellectual apprehension of divine truth. As long as men think on religious things, therefore, there will be theology, and an ever growing, an ever expanding theology. For one age can no more do the final thinking on religious things, than one age can do the final thinking on botany, or astronomy, or on any other science.

Our thought also is cast into new moulds. We speak a different language from the ancients. Seventeenth century

formulas are often unintelligible to twentieth century minds. There is a need of recasting the old truths in many instances. While truth as such has not changed, and the fundamentals have remained undisturbed from century to century, our apprehension of them changes. But a different theory of the creation, or of the creative process, has not destroyed the Creator. The new view of the Bible has not destroyed the Word of God. We will never outgrow the fact that the world needs saving and that Christ was commissioned to do it. But our views on these subjects must needs be modified as new facts are discovered, or new light is thrown upon them, or as a profounder insight illuminates them more clearly.

In view, therefore, of our growing and expanding knowledge, and the intense intellectual and spiritual activity of our age, it is inevitable that both the theology and the pedagogy of the seventeenth century should fail adequately to meet our present needs.

A few examples, by way of illustration, may help to make this clear: The theory of the atonement as revealed in questions 1, 40, 56, 60 and others, does not satisfy the modern mind and heart. The atonement is a profound mystery, and can not be fathomed by the human mind, but experience and a fuller study of the Scriptures have thrown much new light on this doctrine since the Reformation, which must be taken into account by the theologian.

The total depravity of man is no longer satisfactorily treated by such questions as 5 and 8.

The modern mind would hardly be satisfied with the reason for the belief in everlasting punishment as given in question 11. The modern man may hold the belief, but it will be on different grounds.

Our sonship we believe to grow out of a somewhat different relationship to God than that indicated in question 33.

Questions 47 and 48 confuse rather than illuminate the topic which they discuss.

The teaching of the Catechism on the resurrection of the

body in question 57 is no longer generally satisfactory. A new statement of doctrine would no doubt modify the teaching of the Catechism on the sacrament of baptism, and would omit altogether the teaching of question 80.

Indeed a new book would probably be far less theological and doctrinal than our present Catechism, as the emphasis in religion has changed from doctrine to life, from creed to character. Such a manual would seek to give the inquiring student the proper viewpoint for thinking, rather than a cut and dried formula to be believed.

Is the Catechism adequate pedagogically? We believe not. It is, for one thing, too difficult. It is intellectually beyond the average catechumen. It also lacks the strong ethical note present in the teaching of Jesus and demanded by our age. Its method emphasizes memory rather than thought. The answer to a question should not usually be put into the mouth of the pupil, ready-made, as is done by the Catechism.

The theory and practice of education have been revolutionized since the Catechism was written, and it is, therefore, almost inevitable that in this respect also, it should no longer be entirely satisfactory.

It is usually easier to pick flaws than it is to create that which is flawless; to criticize, than to construct; to tear down, than to build up. And yet this is no reason why the Church should not begin to study seriously the problem of producing a manual of instruction for the youth of the Church, which will speak to them in the language of to-day, about the great truths of our holy religion.

READING, PA.

(10)

J. G. NOSS.

In the question as to the need of a change in the matter, or form, or both, of the Heidelberg Catechism, it is well to keep in mind the premises on which its doctrine is based. These

premises may be summarized thus: God created man in His image, endowing him with power to know and love Him and to live in union with Him. Man's sin sundered him from God and thus he could no longer use these powers for the end for which they were given. Whatever good he was able to do on the basis of his fallen nature, he could not do that good which God demanded from him in His law of love and, by doing it, live. But while man's self-love made God's love for man ineffective for ages and generations, His promises of coming deliverance were made from Eve to John the Baptist. These promises were to be fulfilled, not in some merely external and temporary manifestations of His love for man, but in the Seed, who should overcome all the powers of evil and establish an everlasting kingdom. All these promises become available for man in Jesus Christ, the son of Mary as well as the Son of God. He came neither to create nor to destroy men, but to save them; neither to set up or to put down the kingdoms of this world, but to establish one of His own. In short, He did not come to do what God has always done in and for the world, but that which had never been done before. Nor did He come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. Being in His own person the Truth and the Life, the kingdom He came to establish must rest on the same unchangeable basis, and if the subjects of this kingdom are to be fitted for an everlasting life of love, peace, righteousness and glory, there must be powers at hand to make them so. If Christ were only man such powers were impossible. The subjects of this kingdom do not merely become the beneficiaries of His example and teaching in an external way, but partakers of His life and all that this involves. Such participation is effected by the incoming and abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the children of the kingdom, for it is the office of the Spirit to be the medium of the new birth and, on that basis, to teach them "all things" and to "guide them into all truth." But all this only within the sphere of the kingdom, for he is only to take the things of Christ and shew these unto them. The outside world can neither receive, nor

know Him. The "all things," therefore, do not include those of the natural order, nor yet all the "concrete minutiae" of the spiritual; for it is one thing to know the truth and altogether another to know all about it. We know and prophesy only in part. And all these blessings become the inheritance of the children of the kingdom by faith as over against works, and even this faith is wrought and confirmed in them by the Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacraments. And finally the Catechism reminds the children of the kingdom of the debt of gratitude they owe to God and this salvation by confronting them with the law of love and the Lord's Prayer—the law of love because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, and the "Our Father" because they are His children.

On these premises the catechism is constructed. It is sometimes spoken of as "the expression" or "the confession" of the faith of the Reformed Church. Strictly speaking, it is neither. The fact that the Apostles' Creed and the Sacraments constitute the heart of the Catechism does not make it either one. The Creed itself is the expression of the faith of the Church of Christ, in general, and the confession of faith of each individual member of it. The authors of the Catechism had no thought of formulating new articles of faith; their only purpose was to interpret the fundamentals of Christianity in accordance with the Word of God. In the organic law of our Church the Bible is declared to be "the ultimate rule and measure of the whole Christian faith and doctrine," and the Heidelberg Catechism is acknowledged to be "the standard of doctrine in the Reformed Church in the United States" (Articles 188-9). Nor did the authors of the Catechism claim infallibility for their interpretations. Denying such infallibility in the Roman Church, they could not consistently claim it for themselves. Only He who is the Truth can interpret truth infallibly.

In its interpretations the Catechism is Protestant, not Roman, Reformed, not Lutheran, nor Baptist. As such it is of necessity polemic, as any denominational catechism must be.

Notwithstanding its catholic and irenic spirit its polemic features are deemed too pronounced by those who favor a revision. The absence of the polemic element in any denominational interpretation of the Word of God, written or unwritten, is evidence in itself that such denomination has no justification for its existence. Legitimate polemics, rooted in the love of the Truth as it is in Jesus, has never wrought evil in the Church; its suppression has never wrought anything else. Mere strife about words and forms is a different matter.

Another objection to the Catechism is, that its teaching is not abreast with the spirit of the twentieth century, especially as it does not deal with the modern sociological problems. There are two kinds of socialism; the one, that of Jesus whose legitimate sphere of activity is within the Church, the other, that of the socialists whose sphere lies outside of it. Christ and Cæsar both have ends to attain, but neither the ends nor the means to attain them are the same. No civil government, whose organic and statute laws would be formulated on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount, could exist a single year without disaster. The Church of Christ cannot be in health and thrive on any other. No, the "Communion of Saints" is a proper subject for interpretation in a Christian catechism, the "Community of Socialists," not.

It is conceded that every member of the Reformed Church, whether in office or not, who has carefully studied the Catechism, is not perfectly satisfied with all its interpretations; but this has been true from the beginning. Its many merits are appreciated by all. Any new interpretation, in this time of much learning and little wisdom and in which some of the fundamentals of Christianity are regarded as no longer credible, would be not only difficult to formulate, but almost impossible to adopt by the Reformed Church by the process required in our organic law. Any attempt to do so at present might produce a result similar to that of the man who was persuaded to try a panacea for his ills—mostly imaginary—and before death came ordered this epitaph: "I was well; I wished to be better; and here I am."

As to the pedagogic adequacy of the Catechism for our time: The very fact that such a question is raised reveals the superficial, mechanical methods of religious instruction of to-day. We are simply overwhelmed by the amount of outward machinery that is crowded upon us so that we are in danger of forgetting that there is a Holy Spirit within us, without whom we cannot discern the things of the Spirit. When the Spirit of the Master is in the teacher and the catechumen, outward form is a secondary matter; when He is absent the multiplicity of pedagogic aids (?) can only result in keeping Him absent. Mr. Garfield's famous saying as to the essentials which constitute a university is to the point in this matter. Perhaps, if a change in the form of the Catechism is deemed necessary, it might be made to conform with primitive custom (without doing violence to the spirit of the age) by having the catechumen ask the questions and the catechist answer them (Gen. 12:26; Deut. 6:20; Luke 2:46).

NEW HOLLAND, PA.

## VII.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE CHURCH.

WILLIAM C. SCHAEFFER,

What is the purpose of education? Bird Coler, late Controller of New York City, in his recent book, *Two and Two Make Four*, says it is "to make a good man." His statement is worth quoting. After referring to different theories of education, he says, "In everything but one have they differed. There is one point upon which they all centered. From the early Hebrews and Greeks to the recognized modern authorities, there is a thread of agreement that holds a true course. There is one straight-edge that can be laid down upon the history of education from the beginning to now, and it will touch every great teacher from Plato to Pestalozzi, from Moses to Dr. Eliot. Differ as they may and do as to method, they all hold that the purpose of education is to make a good man. By whatever path, virtue is the goal. By whatever method, the end is righteousness. In all the long record there is no note of dissent upon this; in every system advanced everything else is secondary to the development of moral character."

Few would, I suppose, seriously question this statement. Whatever education of body and mind there may be, these clearly have their ultimate purpose in something beyond themselves. Only that training, which makes the utmost possible out of a man, which develops that which is highest and best in him, is worthy of the name of education. Hence all lower forms of training, whether physical or mental, must find their completion in the development of our moral and spiritual being. A man may be a good man, with a weak and sickly body or with an imperfectly trained intellect; but we cannot

conceive of a good man, whose moral sense is dormant, or whose spiritual faculties have been dwarfed. No matter how perfect his physical training may have been, or how far his intellectual culture may have been carried, he is not a truly educated man, if he lacks character; and hence his education has failed of its purpose, so long as it does not lead to his moral and spiritual development. It is in this that all education, whether of the individual or of the nation, must reach its crown and goal.

How may such moral and spiritual education be attained? Can it be found in our ordinary public schools? It is acknowledged by all that the scope of our public schools is limited. However excellent they may be within their own proper sphere, it is well understood that they can not do everything. They stand for purely secular education. The religious element is, in the nature of the case, excluded; and hence they cannot appeal to the highest sanctions for the moral life. Mr. Coler quotes Dr. Paul Monroe, late professor of the history of education in Columbia University, as saying, "Since the aim of education, as *limited* in the work of the American Schools to-day, must eliminate the religious element, it can find no higher purpose than that of determining for each individual the things in this life that are best worth living for." But will that suffice? If the horizon of the pupil is bounded by this life, can the things, which are really worth living for, be seen in their true perspective? Will not the view necessarily be distorted, so that things, which are really secondary in importance, will be exalted into the first place? We may confidently answer the last question in the affirmative. And hence we may with equal confidence affirm that the public schools, however excellent these may be in their own sphere, can never give us that which is highest and best in education. They are no doubt indispensable to the community for what they do give; but at the very best, the community which relies exclusively on them, can never attain to the true purpose of education. The education, which they do give, must be supple-

mented by moral and religious training through some other agency; otherwise what they give may become a curse, rather than a blessing.

On this point, Mr. Coler has some very definite and pronounced convictions. He takes what are probably extreme cases to illustrate his point; but we think that, in the main, his position is correct. He says, "The public schools in this country are not making for righteousness. There isn't an educator of any note in this country who hasn't admitted this. The metropolis of this country is thug-ridden. It has developed a new type of criminal, a conscienceless, fearless young brute who murders for hire, and recognizes no moral accountability and no social obligation. 'Gun-men' and murder-procurers have had their activities exposed in court. There is a similar state of affairs in Paris. Probably it is a little worse there. This is 'Two.' In Paris and New York there are godless public schools. In Paris atheism is a little more bold, a little more positive, than in New York. This also is 'Two.'" The inference which he draws is that, putting "Two" and "Two" together, there can be but one conclusion; and that is that a system of education which excludes the religious element can not, by itself, make good men, and that hence it can not accomplish the true purpose of education.

To sustain this conclusion, Mr. Coler, farther on in his book, gives a number of facts with reference to Paris, since the close of the schools of the religious orders in 1901. He quotes Mr. Alvan F. Sanborn, "a Protestant in religion, a native of Massachusetts, who has devoted all his life to the study of social problems, and whose book, *Paris and the Social Revolution*, is accepted as being the last word in the description of the social forces at work in the French capital." Mr. Sanborn, among other things, says: "Illiteracy is increasing in France at a surprising rate in consequence of the closing of the schools of the religious orders, which the State is unable to replace, and will be unable to replace for a long while to come." And again, "The withdrawal of religious instruction

from the public schools, and the closing of the schools of the religious orders, have been followed by an appalling increase in crime, particularly juvenile crime. The attempt to substitute the teaching of morals for the teaching of religion is a failure." And to confirm this last statement, the chairman of the committee on judiciary reform is quoted as saying that there has been "an increase of eighty per cent. since 1901 in the total number of crimes in the country."

Now, as we said above, we are willing to grant that conditions in New York and Paris are exceptional. Newspapers have protested against the indictment which Mr. Coler has brought against our public schools. Similar results have not followed purely secular education elsewhere. In our smaller cities and in our country districts the majority of our public school teachers are godly men and women; and where they are in control, the schools can not be godless. However little of specifically religious instruction they may impart, their influence and example are all the while exerting a powerful influence in molding the character of their pupils. This we freely grant; yea, and we glory in the fact. Yet the case, as presented by Mr. Coler, and especially as confirmed by the statistics of France, proves conclusively that, excellent as our public schools are within the sphere which belongs to them (and we are unjust, when we expect them to do what lies beyond their own proper sphere), there is urgent need for supplementing their work by distinctively religious education through some other agency. And it is not at all difficult to tell where this kind of education must come from. It can only come from the Church of Jesus Christ.

The facts above presented emphasize the importance of this side of the Church's work as nothing else can. For many, many years the work of education, secular as well as religious, was for the most part in the hands of the Church. Since the State has taken over the former, distinctively church schools have, at least among Protestants, been discontinued; and with it religious education has suffered. It has been relegated to

the Sunday School and the catechetical class. The former meets for only one hour a week, and seldom gives more than half an hour to instruction. Where the latter exists at all, the case is even worse. Three to six months in the year, with one exercise a week, is the best we can claim for the average catechetical class. Is there any wonder that the results compare so unfavorably with those obtained in our public schools in merely secular education?

Much has been said in these days about the great task, which confronts the Church in the work of missions and social service; and these are no doubt of tremendous importance to the world at the present day. But they are not one whit more important than the work of religious education. One of the functions of the Apostolic Church was *teaching* (Acts, 2:42); and it is just as much a function of the Church's life to-day as ever. If our home land is to be preserved from anarchy, if our ever-increasingly efficient secular and scientific education is not to breed a constantly greater number of clever and intelligent thugs and criminals, the Churches must be up and doing. They must supply the religious education, which is necessary as a supplement to the secular education, which is given by the public schools.

How may the Church accomplish this God-given task?

The first thing to be said is that the Church must make earnest with the means and agencies which are at her disposal. These may be inadequate (they no doubt are); yet such as they are, they are here, and it is the part of wisdom and good sense to make the best out of them, until other and better may be provided. What are these agencies which the Church does have immediately at her disposal? And how may they best be used for the purposes of religious education?

I suppose the answer to the former question, which will spontaneously rise to the lips of every one, is this: Foremost among all the agencies for the religious education which the Church possesses is the Sunday School. That is an institution which is coëxtensive with, at least, Protestant Christianity.

It has undoubtedly accomplished, and is still accomplishing, great good. Far be it from me to undervalue or disparage the work which it is doing. Yet it is but right that we should recognize its limitations. Its deficiencies are great. When looked at from the standpoint of the time which is given to it, of the methods which are employed, of the qualifications of its teachers, even of the ideals which are cherished, it compares most unfavorably with the public school. The latter is open six hours a day, during five days in the week, while the former has but one hour a week. The latter has, in many cases, had its methods worked out by pedagogical experts, while the former has in the majority of cases gotten along as best it could without either scientific or even common sense methods. The latter in almost every village and hamlet commands teachers who have had at least some special training for their work; the former has been compelled to accept any one, and has in consequence, had an army of inefficient and poorly prepared instructors. The latter is everywhere conscious of the end for which it exists. It recognizes itself as an educational institution, and its ideals are all molded by that fact. The former has in too many cases no ideals at all; and where it does, they are very often inadequate and low.

The last point may well bear some amplification. It ought to be a truism that the Sunday School is an educational institution, and that it exists for the purpose of religious education. It ought to be pervaded through and through by the educational ideal. Yet in how many cases that ideal is never thought of! Or where it is thought of, it is given a secondary place. The statistical ideal has been exalted above it. Numbers give the appearance of prosperity; and in too many cases Sunday Schools seem to exist for the sake of the enrolment. Not so long ago the writer was present in a school—one of the largest in the denomination. About twenty minutes was given to the lesson; and such was the confusion and noise during that time that bedlam could not have been worse. Such a thing as effective teaching was an utter impossibility. When

the lesson was over, the pastor mounted the platform, and from five to ten minutes was given to an address. The time should have been occupied in driving home the main truths of the lesson, which the school was supposed to have studied. Instead of it, the good man pointed to a device on the wall for registering the attendance; and every one was implored to go to work during the week to look up the absentees and to bring in recruits, so that by the following Sunday, at least five hundred might be present. Can a school, conducted under such circumstances, and with such ideals, contribute anything worth while to the religious education of our people?

That our Sunday Schools may accomplish their mission as institutions for religious education, there is need for thoroughgoing reformation along at least three lines.

1. There is need for a restatement of our Sunday-School ideals. All connected with them need to be impressed that they are *schools*, and that the sole purpose of their existence is religious education. Far better have a school of one hundred, earnestly devoted to the study of religion and morals, than one of a thousand, where that one purpose is forgotten or subordinated to lower ends.

2. There is need for reformation in the construction of our Sunday School buildings. Who can teach in a room, in which there are from one to five hundred others, all talking at the same time, many of them shouting at the top of their voices? What is needed is a building so constructed that every teacher can have his or her own class-room. Classes may then well be much larger; and yet the instruction which is given will not be lost. With buildings constructed as they are now, with from ten to fifty classes in the same room, there is absolutely no possibility of accomplishing anything worthy of the name of education. Conditions which prevail in our best Sunday Schools would not be tolerated in the public schools even by the most backward of our communities.

3. There is need for a thoroughgoing reformation in the teaching forces of our Sunday Schools. Sunday Schools should

have trained teachers. Not every one is fitted, either by nature or by training, for the task of teaching religion; for there is no subject more difficult. Only persons who have the qualifications for the task should be asked to be teachers. As Sunday Schools are usually organized, it is safe to say that no congregation has half the number of persons, properly qualified, that are needed as teachers. But if we had buildings, so constructed that every class could have its separate class-room, the want could be more easily met. From an educational point of view, it would be far better to have a school of two hundred divided into eight classes of twenty-five to a class, with eight well-qualified teachers in charge, and each in a separate room, than to have the same school, divided into twenty-five classes of eight each, with twenty-five average teachers, such as we have to-day, and all shouting against each other in the same room.

There are, no doubt, untold possibilities in our Sunday Schools. With the divorce between secular and religious education, which exists in this country, they are an absolute necessity. But that they are not accomplishing what may reasonably be expected of them is evident. What they need is a renewal of consecration to the end for which they exist, and a thoroughgoing reformation in their ideals and methods.

Another agency which the Church has at hand for the accomplishment of her task in religious education is the catechetical class. Where a pastor, who has pedagogical skill, conscientiously sets himself to work to teach religion to his young people, he has here an instrument of incalculable value. Though he meets the class for only six or nine months in the year, he can impress the truths of our religion here as nowhere else. To make the most out of its possibilities, he ought to have two classes, a junior and a senior class,—the former for all children between the ages of seven and fourteen, and the latter for those who are preparing for confirmation. In the former children ought to remain from year to year, until they are ready for the full communion of the Church. The instruc-

tion ought to be largely informal, clear and analytic. The aim should be thoroughness. Illustrations, parables, Biblical stories, and anecdotes of concrete religious experience should be freely used. Above all the members of the class need the warm sympathetic touch of the pastor's own religious life.

When one considers the tremendous power which the catechetical class has been in many a pastor's work, and the enormous possibilities which are in efficient and faithful catechization, one wonders why it has so often fallen into desuetude and why it is so often a practical failure. What are some of the difficulties and dangers to be avoided? And what are the requisites for successful catechization?

Foremost among the things to be avoided is mere routine memory work. With our catechisms, arranged in the form of question and answer, the danger of being satisfied with such mere memory work is ever present. Nothing except the lack of reverence and genuine godliness on the part of the catechist could be more fatal than this. There is no objection to the committing of sound words, in which great religious truths are enshrined; but the committing should be the end of the educational process, not the beginning. Before the child is asked to commit any formula, he needs to be taught the truths which it expresses. He should be made to understand every word used; and his heart should be made to feel the force of the religious truth which is involved. After that is accomplished, mere words will take care of themselves.

Chief among the requisites for successful catechization is that the instruction should touch the present needs of the catechumen's life. It must not simply seek to awaken the child's religious consciousness; but it must answer the questions which that awakening consciousness is constantly asking. And it must link in the child's life with the present problems of the Church's life. Nothing can be more fatal to the child's religious life than to attempt to nourish it with the husks of dead issues or worn-out religious thought. It is true, the child will not at once know that he is being fed on husks; but after he

has gone forth into the world, he will find it out. When the instruction which he has received in the class fails to meet the new issues of the day in which he lives, there is bound to be a reaction, which may be fatal to his whole religious life.

The writer has long since been convinced that, considered from a pedagogical point of view, it is a mistake to continue the use of a text-book in our elementary religious instruction, which is three hundred and fifty years old. In what other line of educational work would such a thing be even thought of? No school or college, which should attempt such a thing in any other kind of instruction, would be tolerated in any community. Why should we put a text-book for religious instruction into the hands of our children, and tell them that they have here all that is necessary for them to believe and do, when yet that book knows little or nothing about some of the most vital problems which will confront them in their daily life? Yet just that it what we have been doing. Our Catechism does not even contain the word missions;<sup>1</sup> and yet we have come to hold up the work of missions as the great work

<sup>1</sup> The Catechism, indeed, quotes the great Commission, Mt. 28: 18-20; and that, not simply as a proof text, but as part of answer 71. The catechist, with pedagogical skill, may find an opportunity of introducing the subject of missions at this point; and this may be urged against the position taken above. But it is to be observed, the great Commission is introduced, not to teach or even to suggest the subject of missions, but as an authority for the practice of baptism. Probably no better argument could be found in favor of the position that the idea of missions was not even present to the minds of the authors of the Catechism. They neither engaged in mission work, nor did they feel the need of missions in their conception of the Christian religion. Probably the nearest thing to our modern idea of missions, found in connection with the Catechism, is the following comment on question 71 in the Commentary of Ursinus: "*Go ye and teach all nations*: as if he would say, do not confine your instructions to the posterity of Abraham, or to particular nations; but go and teach the whole world. Christ here removes the wall which had hitherto separated the Jews from all nations, and makes a distinction between the sacraments of the Old and the New Testament. The Old was instituted for the Jews only, but Christ here declares that baptism was not for the Jews only, but for all nations." That is all; and then follows a long exposition of the doctrine of baptism.

of the Church! Is it any wonder that our people are so slow to respond to the Church's challenge? For generations we have been training our children for church-membership by using for their instruction an old book which knows nothing about this and other fundamental and vital issues. And by our legislation and by our entire attitude we tell the children that here they have a summary of all that they must do and believe!

No: effective catechization must deal with the vital issues of our everyday Christian life; and the pastor, who wishes to continue to use our otherwise excellent Catechism, must at least supplement its teaching by other lessons, drawn from other sources.

A third means for religious education, which the minister has ready to his hand, is the regular preaching of the Word. This is in reality the greatest and best. Here the pastor has the opportunity of reaching the entire community, old as well as young. And such is the scope and such the importance of religious education, that no one ever quite outgrows his need for it. As our entire life is, in an important sense, but a training school for the higher and better life to come, so the day never comes in this world when any of us has wholly outgrown his need for religious education. And the opportunity as well as the means for this continued higher education of our religious life has fortunately been prepared in the regular services of the sanctuary.

That this end may be attained, two things must be kept in mind.

1. Much of the preaching must be didactic. Its aim must be to instruct and edify. Of course, there is always room for the parenetic. Many are naturally phlegmatic; and hence there is need for exhortation, for persuasion and warning. And there are in every congregation those who are but adherents. They need to be won to the faith. And there are in every community open and wilful sinners, to whom the Gospel must be brought as glad tidings of salvation. Hence there is

always room and need for purely evangelistic preaching. But the great body of the congregation consists of Christians, whose great need is edification. They have accepted the faith; and they are making earnest with it in their daily life. But the more earnest they are, the more will they think of the great mysteries of faith. Life becomes full of problems, which they feel they and the Church must solve. Where shall they look for guidance in their thinking and working? Where but to the pulpit, under whose droppings they sit from week to week? Hence the pastor needs constantly to preach the great doctrines. He should be a constant student of the life of the community and of the age in which he lives; and his preaching should be an ever new interpretation of the Gospel to the needs and perplexities of his people. And no preacher who fails at this point, can hope to be successful in the highest and truest sense of the word.

2. Not only must the minister aim to edify the adults in his congregation, he should feed the lambs of the flock. Unfortunately the lambs too often are not present. That is likely due to several causes. The idea has prevailed that the Sunday School is the children's Church; and the pastor has too generally overlooked them in his ministrations. Two things, therefore, demand attention: The children must be won back to the Church service; and after they are there, they must receive their portion. The former has in a number of cases been accomplished by the "Junior Congregation," and the latter by a special brief sermon to the children. Whatever the means, religious education demands that this side of the work of the sanctuary be not neglected.

Finally, all this still leaves a large part of the problem of religious education unsolved. There are millions of our fellow citizens who are not connected with the Church, and who never attend any of its services. How can these be supplied with this kind of education? The problem is large—as large as that of Home Missions. We have only one suggestion to offer. The children of most of these persons attend the public schools.

The State can not undertake to supply what is needed. Why might not some arrangement between the Churches and the State be effected, whereby the latter would allow the former to come in for an hour or more each week, after the regular work of the school is done, to instruct the children in religion? Attendance would, of course, have to be entirely voluntary. The Churches of any community would have to agree as to the manner in which the work should be done; and they would have to assume the entire responsibility for it. We simply raise the question. Why might not a part of the work be done in this way?

LANCASTER, PA.

## VIII.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE HOME.

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Religion as a life is both an intensive and a comprehensive view which demands new methods in religious education in the home, school, and church. This is true, however, not because religion in reality has not always been a life, but because men did not so conceive it and consciously plan accordingly to foster it. Christian education in the time of the Old Catholic Church was largely a catechumenate preparing the pagans for entrance into the church. In the period of the Roman Catholic Church, when religion as an institution predominated, the problem of religious education broadened somewhat but was nevertheless restricted to the institutional and ecclesiastical limitations peculiar to the system. The great Reformation of the sixteenth century burst the dykes of ecclesiasticism, so that the stream of the inner religious life was permitted to overflow the spheres of common life more freely. The conception of sacred and secular was broken down. Theoretically, at least, "the freedom of the Christian man" was acknowledged. The reversion of Protestantism to Catholic philosophy and dogma, however, greatly restricted the conception of religious education which at first so grandly promised to cover the whole of life. The emphasis of religious education was changed from the church as an institution to the Bible and the creed. It is only in our late modern period that the full freedom of the idea of religion as life is being proclaimed as a basis of religious education, regarding man in his whole being as an individual and as related to society, in the light of his present as well as his future destiny. It is an advance toward the full and free emphasis of the present consciousness

of God in life as affecting man in body and spirit as a part of the ever-coming and eternal Kingdom of God. The movement of dogma within the Church has been from the theological to the anthropological, to the soteriological, onward to the sociological. That is to say, the focal point at present is the problem of eschatology, the working out of a clear consciousness of the social and individual basis of the Kingdom of God as a present as well as a future reality. Modern economic ideals and religious concepts are rapidly approaching one another. The days of the necessity of a universal religion are at hand. The Kingdom of God is upon us. Consequently not only the conception but the reality of religion as a life is demanding new methods of religious education touching every department and calling of life.

Religious education in the home is no exception. Indeed, considering the focal significance of the home in civilization there is no department in which it is more true that new methods are necessary. The unity of life, furthermore, requires a hearty coöperation between the home, school, state and church. We acknowledge that we are far from realizing more than the beginnings of such a conception in actual practice. We must feel our way. We have but few precedents. Nothing but the heroism of such a faith as described in Hebrews 11:1 (A. R. V.) will suffice us: "Now faith is the giving of substance to things hoped for, the test of things not seen." In the spirit of such an activist faith we believe that religion as life ever carries with it its own realities—God, Christ, the soul, and the community of souls. Inherent in them and their historical movement we have the fact and the content of religious education. Psychology, pedagogy, and sociology are after all only formal. They discuss the processes. They have no Gospel to offer. They only indicate directions and methods. Consequently the problem of religious education in the home must recognize the influence of the sciences on the methods to be employed, but religion as life, an ever-growing experience of God, self, fellowmen and the world,

must always deliver us from the modern "psychologizing of religion" which so readily depersonalizes the realities of experience and volatilizes everything into a colorless pantheism. Professor Höffding declares, "Religion is faith in the values of life." Another authority equally significant says, "All values ultimate in persons."

In the light of this setting of the problem, religious education in the home may be considered from two points of view: First, some of the principles underlying all religious education but including the home; second, the functions of the home in the religious life. The former will be treated only in summary statement; the latter, more in detail.

Among the principles most prominently recognized is the immediacy of consciousness. Nowhere in the process of education more than in infancy and childhood is it true that the directness of the vital relations of life is experienced. The impress of environment, the touch of personality, the sense of self, the consciousness of God—these all are primary elements of life and nowhere more simple and direct than in the home.

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

Religion as life depends very much on the transmission of truth through personality and the constant effect of environment. The thing to be noted and appreciated, however, is the immediacy of consciousness. It is in and through the home that we are introduced to the world and come to self-consciousness. There, too, the consciousness of other persons as related to us comes to expression. As the nursery rhyme

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are,"

appeals to the child, so the cosmic consciousness arises in the soul in the early days of home life. What father or mother has been able to answer the instinctive questions of a growing child from three to five years of age with reference to the origin of stars, and flowers, and birds without the idea of a God.

The God-consciousness of the child, instinctive and sure without the mediation of temple or priest, is one of the marvels of the home. However naïve the child's life-view may be, it is significant that philosophy after long detours returns to its instinctive immediacy; witness, Eucken and Bergson.

The principle of personality and life may be stated as "truth through personality." Life begets life. The conscious religious life is peculiarly dependent on the fact of incarnation. The vitalizing of truth in personal life and its transmission from generation to generation is the very basis of the home. "Personal influence remains a great force throughout human life; but it is far more powerful with children than with adults, not only because of the well-known imitative tendency of children, but because the child's world is distinctively a personal world."

History and life is another principle in which religious education in the home is intensely interested. Religion as a life has a human history. It has ever been expressing itself and always will. It is necessary to initiate the child into the history of religion, giving him the best of the tested experience of the past. The content of the present religious consciousness is never divorced from the past. The connection has always been a vital one. As a life and therefore a growth, nothing of the past may permanently bind or throttle the present in spontaneity and freedom but without the past there could be no present living consciousness. There is an appreciation of the past which is creative. The vital forces or realities are the same. There is a definite content of teaching which necessarily must form the point of contrast in the immediacy of the child's mind with the best experience of parents and earlier generations. The historic basis of Christianity both in the personality of Jesus, apostles, prophets, teachers, and believers in general and Christian institutions and doctrines must be realized in the continuity of Christian life in the present Christian consciousness. Here again the home is paramount in importance.

The fourth principle may be called fellowship or association. It touches the whole problem of companionship of parents and children, children with children in and outside of the home. By the silent influence of example, by conversation, exhortation, appeal, by fellowship in play, household duties, and social life, by leadership in introducing the child into the complexity of life outside of the home in shop, store, school, and church,—by all these and all else that goes to make up the personal and social atmosphere of the home, the character of the child is formed and he is helped or hindered to become himself as he is and will be.

There remains another principle, namely, self-activity. There can be no real education without it. The whole process of the revelation of God to the soul is centered in the arousing of the inner self to activity of thought and action. The tendency in secular education to emphasize this principle in response to the necessities of life should make us more concerned about it in religious education. Religious feelings and aspirations must find expression, individually and socially, in the worship of God and the service of man. Here again, not in theory but in the concrete practice of daily life, the home is the most original and important of our race institutions in conserving and advancing the welfare of man. The highest development of the individual is essential to the best social improvement.

This principle is inseparably bound up with another called coöperation. The social emphasis of life has become so great that socialism has become one of the important challenges of the human mind. The relation of the home to the social consciousness is most direct and vital. There is little doubt that the social significance of the family as a coöperative unit, instinct with the highest ideals of the common good, enters deeply into the problem of religious education. The change from the monarchical to the democratic view of life involves equally great changes in the home. It is a question whether the ideal of common welfare in the home is not at last joining hands with other social forces and breaking the bondage of

wealth, aristocracy, and heredity. At any rate the relation of the family to our social problem is evident and the demand for a religion in the family that will help to make possible a fraternal, just, and righteous community is one of the new paths just being blazed into the unknown land of the coming social life of the twentieth century.

This statement of principles is intended merely to give a setting to the discussion of the functions of the home in the religious education.

The three great institutions on which Christianity bases the progress of mankind are the home, the church, and the Kingdom of God. Just what the Kingdom of God is in its real relation to the present age is the burning question of the hour. These three institutions embrace the whole life of man. There are three functions that are alike to each of them.

The first is the coördination in worship of the relation of God as creator and father and of man as creature and son; the second is the initiation of each new generation with the history of the Christian religion as the past expression of the vital relation of God and man; the third is the service of man for man, as brethren, sons of God; or in simplified form they are worship, education, service; the ritualistic, the didactic, and the social elements of life.

The principles of immediacy of consciousness and of personality and life are both fundamental in worship as a vital religious factor in the home. It is one of those intangible and yet most real things which is far easier experienced than described. Devout reverence before God, coupled with obedience and hunger for fellowship, as well as aspiration to be like Him, and love toward our fellowmen surely is a matter of the spirit. "God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." The character of the persons worshipping determines its purity, strength, and power. "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." A saying of Carlyle supplements this one of Emerson very emphatically, "Religion is what a man does practically believe

concerning his vital relations to the mystery of the universe." The spirit and attitude of parents toward God, persons, and the higher values of life have very much to do with the worship of the children in the home. The home must have an atmosphere in which worship can live. The child's world is largely personal. Its sense of worship, obedience and love can only be conceived in terms of personal relations. It is in the home, therefore, that the deepest rooting of the sense of God and the worship of God must be made. The child should be led into three definite directions.

First, he should be led into the expression of his own individual, private consciousness of reverence before God. One of the first elements of the work of religious education in the home is to awaken the sense of wonder in the presence of the mystery and immensity of the universe, and awe and reverence before its majesty, power and harmony. Who can measure the influence of the little poem referred to above, taught by mother whilst watching the stars on a summer night, just before being put to bed and saying the evening prayers. Or who can be surprised at the three-year-old boy clapping his hands and crying out, "How pretty! How pretty!" in viewing a beautiful sunset. So the appreciation of the beauty and wonder of the spring flowers or cultivated ones in the winter windows, aroused in the child by a reverent and godly mother, showing them in the spirit of the Master, puts the spirit of worship into the family life. "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow." Indeed, in mystery, in quietness, in power, they grow and are arrayed in royal splendor beyond that of kings and queens. What child has not asked, "Who made them so beautiful?"

Just as elemental as the sense of awe and wonder growing into trust and love, is that of awe and fear growing into obedience and reverence. The austere in nature has its place and meaning. The thunder and lightning, the storms also are messengers. Sin, sorrow, disease, death, as they manifest themselves in the course of the family and community life

become part of the mystery of child life. Who does not remember the thousand and one questions of early childhood. How amazingly fundamental they are!

Beside reverence and obedience, the element of love and sympathy with the great mystery and marvel of the universe should be aroused in the child. And how easy it is, when all is clothed in terms of personality and God is a reality of life and power and love to the parents themselves, Jesus made children feel the nearness of the Father. Many will remember how early this sense of worship of a personal God through a godly mother came to consciousness. When the little sister lay ill and dying, how you went secretly into the garret and prayed that God would spare her. At another time when the awful summer thunder storm shook the house, you saw beyond the storm to God. How the hush of the night opened the very heavens to you. How the coming of the spring and the finding of the early flowers made you kneel and kiss them, saying, "God is good." Do you remember the dawning of the sense of eternity and the infinitude of space and when you joined with them the idea of right and wrong, reward and punishment?

At every juncture the home stands out as the clearing house of the problems, perplexities, joys and pleasures aroused by the inquiries of the child's growing soul. In this period we well say, "Blessed is the boy or girl whose mother read the Bible for them and prayed with them," And "Blessed, the boy whose father invited him to frequent walks in the woods and meadows." "Blessed, the children who have a Christ-like home atmosphere of righteousness and love."

The reading of the Bible stories to little children at this period is of great value in stimulating the individual sense of worship, but this feature will be discussed later.

The second direction into which the home should lead the child is toward a natural and sincere family worship. The consciousness that father and mother and brother and sisters likewise feel the mystery, power and love of God is equally as important for the child. It confirms his own inner im-

pulses and strivings. It leads him out into a community expression. It stimulates his self-confidence. It prepares him for the worship of the Church and Sunday School. It gives him courage to be true to the calls of conscience. The decay of family worship in America is an ominous prophecy of the irreverence and disobedience of the new generation of Americans. Nothing else can ever take the place of family prayer. It has a distinctive function of its own in the religious life. Its absence means an irreparable loss.

As a part of worship the reading of the Bible is essential. It is wise to follow a plan in the readings, as for example, the portions assigned by the International Sunday School committee each day, or some other series arranged for devotional purposes. It is also practical to use the Apostles Creed at times as well as the Lord's Prayer. The Beatitudes, the twenty-third, the eighth, and the nineteenth Psalms and the Ten Commandments repeated in concert may be used to vary the form. Nothing is more helpful than the assistance of the children in the reading of the lesson. In the absence of the parents the children, if properly instructed, can conduct a simple devotional service themselves, as is being done in some families.

It has been found very helpful to the children to have their birthday remembered in a special prayer. Thus also in times of illness in the family the spirit of prayer has been a great factor. Any one who has at all followed the children in their evening prayers at such times has found some real surprises in the special petitions which they added to meet their special needs.

The question of a suitable time for family worship is very perplexing in many of our modern homes. In many instances the most favorable opportunity is immediately after the evening meal. As a rule where there is a will there is both time and a way.

Giving thanks at meals is also a part of family worship to which more attention should be given both in its real signifi-

cance as an expression of our sense of thanksgiving and love to God and in its value as a factor in the development of the spirit of worship in the children. The children themselves should often ask the blessing and give the prayer of thanks.

The third direction into which the home should lead the child is toward a vital experience of sincere community worship. The child should early be brought to Sunday School and Church. For the parents to send the child when either one or the other could bring him, is a grave mistake. It is of the utmost significance that the parents should be the ones who initiate him in this form of the worship of God. Through Bible reading and family worship and his own inner prayer life, he finds the introduction of the community idea quite natural. The unity of worship impresses him. It is not only on Sunday in Church and Sunday School that he should be made to feel this community reverence but on the great church and national holidays and other public occasions where the recognition of God and prayer are made, so that he may be made conscious of the fact that God is "over all and through all and in all" and that the whole creation should worship Him.

The didactic function of religious education in the home is the second point to be considered. The problem here is approached in the more technical meaning of the word education. It has reference particularly to the initiation of the child into the history of the religion and the present vital consciousness of it among its professors. With us it means the fact and history of the Christian religion and it further implies that the Bible is the text-book, and that the history of the Church leading up to the present Christian consciousness now dominant in the community and expressed in its literature and institutions, is its illustrative material. The principle of history and life is here predominant. Our thought is therefore turned to the method and content of religious teaching.

Religious education aims to bring the child into the full and free consciousness of God, self, the world and fellowmen. It is very evident that the factors of the problem include for us as

Christians the reality of God as the creative Father, revealed in Jesus, and vitalized in the life of brotherhood in the history and development of the Kingdom of God. Just what part the home plays in this in an educational way is the question.

After all, the elements, as in all complex situations and problems, are comparatively simple. We freely acknowledge that the home is first in the order of time, and most direct in the immediacy of its touch and influence on the child. Consequently here it is that we find the elements, as it were, in solution. Here is the period of greatest plasticity on the part of the child, and the greatest moulding powers on the part of parents and of the environment around both parents and children.

In acknowledging the Christian view of God and the world, we, therefore, look upon religious education as Christian, however much we may think of the universal aspects of religion psychologically, biologically and sociologically considered. For merely so regarded religion would be but formal. When it comes to the historical content and the actual fact of a life really lived religiously, we have to do with the Christian religion.

Now the main factors in the more technical idea of religious education in the home are the same as those which must persist and ever grow in consciousness throughout the whole of human life. They are these: a vital present Christian consciousness and environment; the Bible as the revelation of God to the individual and society in and through Jesus Christ; science as revealing the fact and wonder of the universe; Christian art, literature and history as an expression of Christ in individual and social life.

All this seems very general and yet it is most concrete as soon as we begin to apply it. It is natural to recognize the several periods of growth adopted by all graded lessons of the present religious educational systems.

In infancy, during the age of one to three years, the problem of religious education in the home is most critical, because

it is so intangible and yet so concrete. It involves particularly the first element mentioned above—a vital personal, individual and social Christian consciousness and environment: parents, family, home. As we reflect upon our lives, what has been more determinative of our characters than just this fact. Many a Hannah conceived a Samuel and in the very conception created a man of God. The real problem of religious education in the home is the education of the parents and the creation of the real Christian family. Both the prenatal and postnatal influences are paramount in importance. The Christian atmosphere and the vital, personal life of the home charges the personality of the growing child. What has been given above under the heading worship in the home applies here and throughout the whole treatment; for, without this environment of real spiritual living, little may be expected from the early development of the child. It is not the least difficult to make it practical. Simply to be natural as Christian parents is to transmit our spirit to our children. They must of necessity learn a language; in the Christian home they will speak with a Christian tongue. They soon distinguish persons and objects and give them names; in the Christian home, they soon know the symbols of the faith—the Bible, a kneeling posture in prayer, the ready hand in loving service. They soon say “I” and “me,” “you” and “they”; with Christian parents, they already confess, mother, father, brother, sister, Jesus and God. They readily reach toward the moon and stars, and delight in birds, animals and flowers; in the Christian home, they solve all this mystery of why, how and whither in God. They follow the days in play imitating your daily labors and your Sabbath habits; in the Christian home, they will know the real joy of the Sabbath in its contrast with the days of toil. In other words, the child from one to three years of age in the Christian home is already introduced to the great fundamentals of religious education: witness-bearing personalities, God, Bible, nature and the Sabbath.

In the next period from four to eight years of age, this same

process of naturally living the Christian life before the child goes on but it gradually becomes more consciously objective and concrete. The time for reading the simple Bible stories, the simple myths and nursery poetry has full sway. Simple nature reading dealing particularly with birds, animals and flowers, and insects always fascinate little children. At the very beginning of the period the parents should bring the child to Sunday School and make special effort to coöperate with the teachers of the Beginners' and Primary Departments in the home study of the lessons; for the graded system of lessons is admirably adapted in these two departments to the needs and impulses of the child. In the person of the parents the point of contact between the child and the home should be made real and vital. In coöperating with the Sunday School the use of Christian art by means of reproductions as the Perry pictures, the Tissot copies, etc., should be freely made. For general reading several of our publishers have issued sets of ten to twelve volumes like *The Children's Hour*, by Houghton and Mifflin Company, which are very satisfactory. Individual volumes are numerous nowadays. There is no dearth of good children's readings.

Taking it all in all, this is one of the most important periods of child life. It is characterized with the growth of imitation, the birth of the imagination, and the development of the sense of right and wrong. The moral feelings and religious instincts are never closer than now. Scripture illustrations should abound. The social virtues should be cultivated; such as, obedience, kindness, politeness, order, cleanliness, truthfulness, courage, cheerfulness. The close companionship of parents and children is highly essential. The mother reading to her children is the real educator of this period.

In early youth, from nine to thirteen years of age, religious education in the home should particularly seek close fellowship with the public school, Sunday School and the church. As a period it is characterized by the birth of idealism, hero worship, development of the social feeling. Junior societies

are natural now. No center of social life should be more attractive than the home and no home too fine or too poor for the children. It is the age in which they read for themselves. Simple history, stories of adventure and heroism, good, clean fiction should be within their reach. In the religious reading the heroes and heroines of the Bible should be read and studied. The graded Sunday School lessons for juniors usually covers such a series. Above all a simple junior study of the life of Christ should be completed. The Bible as the record of God's dealing with men should stand out prominently. Where the Sunday School is deficient the home might well secure "The Junior Bible" course, covering the heroes and heroines of the Bible, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, which is one of the best instructive courses published at present. This course followed by parents and children is most helpful and stimulating. By the time it is covered the child will have made his own Bible by binding the readings, the Tissot illustrations, and questions; for which the authors and publishers of the series have provided in a truly artistic manner.

Early adolescence, from the age of twelve to fourteen, is the critical storm and stress period of the growing child. It is marked by the growth of the sense of sex, emotional activity, moral insight, and moral values. Young peoples' societies now become a natural expression. Hearty coöperation of the home with the Sunday School which should have a well-graded course of study throughout is increasingly essential. Several points should be clearly marked in the home training: personal cleanliness and order, industry and self-control, personality and idealism.

Books on the mystery and sanctity of life should be brought to the attention of the boy and girl alike. The following list has been found quite practical and helpful: *A Song of Life* (Morley); *The Renewal of Life* (Morley); *Truths, Talks with a Boy* (Lowry); *From Youth Into Manhood* (Hall); *What a Boy Ought to Know* (Stahl); *What a Girl Ought to Know* (Stahl).

If the Sunday School fails to provide in this period a good boy's and girl's life of Christ, the wide-awake father and mother should secure one published by the University of Chicago Press, entitled *The Life of Jesus* (Gates).

To bring Jesus as a personal factor into their own lives at this time is most necessary. It associates Him with the idealism growing within them in a way that can never be forgotten.

Under the next division of "Service in the Home," the necessity of associating the children with the parents in the work of the home will be emphasized. Definite effort at inculcating industry, self-discipline and conscientiousness should be made. Surely the home should coöperate more sympathetically with the domestic science and manual training departments of our public schools during this critical period of the life of their children.

Adolescence, the period from fourteen to eighteen, is marked by the growth of the larger social self, the social impulses, sympathy, love, heroism, vocational and spiritual ideals. It is the high school period of life, the time of choice and decision, of work and calling and independence. The main function of the home now is that of sympathy and guidance. Unless the earlier inner fellowship and influence of parents with children has been established, there can now be no real help from the home. The parents will find themselves outside of the centers of sympathy and power in the lives of their own children. But who can measure the influence of the father and mother who hold the hearts of their boys and girls during this time of life. When children in their struggle toward self-realization instinctively come to the home for advice and help, the real victory is already won. As far as the more technical religious educational work is concerned in the home, little can be done; for this is the time when the boy and girl work on their own basis of interest and character. It is very evident, however, that the church and Sunday School have a great responsibility to provide such courses of study as will lead the young people into the larger moral and religious problems of life.

The separate treatment of worship, education, and service is only a method. It must be remembered that the spirit of worship pervades the whole, that the educational process is persistent throughout, and that service is but the constant growing expression.

The growth and development of the social consciousness and its obligations and privileges in this practical way is a new field of investigation. The importance of the home in it all is one of the first recognitions made by the leaders. "Remember, that all must live in some sort of a home—that everyone finds his chief happiness there—that character is developed there—that no great advance, spiritual or material, is possible which does not begin with the home—that the home-makers of America have the making of the nation." This is one of the six watch-words printed on the literature of the American School of Home Economics. It is characteristic of the modern psychological, sociological viewpoint. The relation of religious education to social service is one of the great themes of the day. The meaning of the home and family touches the very heart of it.

In the relation of parent and child we have the social virtues of respect and obedience; in the sharing of life among brothers and sisters, those of equality and service; in the coöperative principle of the home, those of the common good of the state; in home work and duties, those of industry and vocation; in home worship, those of reverence and authority.

In the conception of the home as the primary school of life we presuppose children, and at least two or more in the family, in order the more easily to incarnate and realize the higher social ideals of life. The courage to live is not only required in the various great moral issues of the day in combating a deep-seated national pessimism but the courage to marry, to beget and train and send forth more children is the challenge given to all of the civilized nations. The social significance of the home is inherent in the creation of life, as well as in the sympathy and coöperation developed in the midst of the family.

It was our purpose to sketch, for the several periods of life given above in treating the didactic element in the religious education of the home, the social virtues and ideals and forms of service suitable for each, but the scope of this article exceeds the permissible space limits. Several fundamental principles, however, may be stated.

First, parents should make the home and the family one of the chief considerations of their life. No educational institution can take its place, especially in teaching the spirit of service and the common good. Second, life should be sufficiently simplified to allow time for family fellowship and intimate personal companionship. The vital points of contact with the community life through recreation and pleasure and school life should be made in and through the family in such a manner as to keep parents and children in intimate touch and knowledge of each other without breaking the real companionship of the family. Third, time and money should be given freely as may be necessary to create such home occupations as will bring parents into companionship and partnership in work. Gardens, workshops, sewing rooms for the boys and girls should be a part of every home. Through this the connection should be made with domestic science and manual training in the public schools. No child, rich or poor, should be removed from the real work of the world. Economic freedom should be the spirit of the home. The common weal means the common toil of all. Fourth, the home should at all times coöperate with the junior civic organizations in creating public spirit, with boards of health and sanitation to promote health, and with patriotic organizations in stimulating the love of country. Fifth, every home should have such a sense of love of life as to teach a healthy philanthropy at all times. Neither home nor foreign missions should be a strange topic. In the courses of illustrative reading available these days no material is more interesting than that of the awakening of the great eastern nations, their social and religious customs, missionary biography, and the heroism and idealism of Christianity in asserting itself as the universal religion.

It may seem that the home is unduly exalted and religion illogically enlarged in this view of religion as life. "Remember, that on the breadth and strength of the base depends the height of a pinnacle—on the home foundation we rear the pinnacle of all that is good in state and individual." The more democratic and coöperative the state becomes, the more will the home be essential and the more must religion, as a comprehensive life, expand into the Kingdom of God among men.

GREENSBURG, PA.

## IX.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

H. M. J. KLEIN.

The widespread public interest in religious education is a part of that spirit of new idealism which is asserting itself in our age. In twentieth century America we have not only new external conditions brought about by scientific knowledge and discoveries and by changing social life, but we are entering a new inner world and we are sharing with mankind in the desire for higher moral and spiritual ideals. We are beginning to see that if our life is to be noble and healthy we must not neglect the invisible world and the culture of the soul. This new inner world which is opening with extraordinary interest before the eyes of thoughtful men, this "new idealism" as Professor Eucken calls it, this really finest spirit of all the ages is revealing to us above all things the permanence of religion as a fact in human nature and human history. We see more clearly than ever that the work of the world and the culture of the soul must go hand in hand. We see that the highest efficiency of a people comes only when constructive work is united with a growing impulse toward religion.

This master thought of modern times has given fresh stimulus to the whole question of the religious life of men and nations. We are beginning to realize that it simply will not do to take sixteenth or eighteenth century ideals of religion, or nineteenth century materialistic ideals of science and apply them to twentieth century conditions without question. If, as has been predicted, the twentieth century is to be an age of reconciliation, and if, as we know, a new outer and inner world

is confronting us, then it is our plain duty to reopen certain fundamental questions and to rethink them and restate them for ourselves. One of these questions concerns us vitally, for it has to do with the religious education of the young men and women of America.

At the outset we must try to arrive at a clear conception of the meaning of the term religious education. To do this, it may be well to fix with a certain degree of definiteness the meaning involved in the two terms, religion and education. What then is religion? It is primarily a life, a spirit, an attitude. It is the sharing of life between the spirit of man and the spirit of God. As life it is not primarily a subject to be taught, but rather a thing to be lived, though instruction in religion is helpful. Religion is not primarily a creed, though creeds are the outgrowth of religion. Religion is not the same as conduct, though conduct is an important part of religion. Religion does not mean the same thing as formal worship, though the outward acts of worship symbolizing the inward thought are an important element in religion. What then is religion? It is the sharing of God's life by the spirit of man. It is not something grafted on to man in addition to the other elements in his life, not an addendum. It is the motive power in all of man's highest life, the spirit that permeates and promotes the growth of the whole personality in all its manifold relations, the reality which makes worth while every element of human nature, every phase of human activity. We must not think of religion as a thing apart and outside of the rest of man's experience. Man is a unit and religion must pervade his entire consciousness, so that all the thoughts, words and deeds of his life shall be considered sacred because they are born out of a spirit controlled by the thought and the life of God.

What then is education? Is it not the process of developing the whole personality of man and adjusting it to God as he has manifested himself in the whole environment of the world? Education is not synonymous with instruction, though formal

instruction is an important part of education. Education is not confined to the school; it is the resultant of all the influences of life upon the individual, "under the tutelage of the Infinite Spirit." Here again we must recognize man's unity. It is the whole individual who is before us to be educated. While we can emphasize one phase of the individual at a time, we cannot say "Now I will train the muscle, now the mind, now the soul; now I will cultivate one phase of your life and then the other." There are no such artificial subdivisions of the human consciousness. It is the interests of the whole man that demand attention in the educational process. Education then is the eternal perfecting process by which the whole man, body, soul and spirit, is "to become in time," as Fichte suggests, "what he eternally is."

If religion is the source of inspiration for the highest life, and education is the process by which the individual is to be brought into that largest, richest, highest life, then religious education in the nature of the case cannot be isolated and fragmentary. It must be the permanent and controlling element in the whole development of human personality. Its task must be nothing more or less than the permeation of all education with the religious ideal as well as the permeation of all religion with the educational ideal. All education must be ultimately religious. All religion must be ultimately educational in character. The abiding aim of religious education must be the normal development of the whole human nature divinely related.

When it comes to the practical application of these principles to life the real difficulty of the problem becomes apparent, just because life is so complex and unanalyzable. This is not a theme on which a thoughtful man will readily prate "thus and so." A small mind always has a ready formula that will solve an intricate problem, and a little scheme that will bring about the Millennium. But a man who has breadth of outlook and sees how varied and complex life really is may well hesitate to suggest a method of solution. Still the fascina-

tion of the subject and its overweighing importance lure on thinker and educator to hazard opinion and experiment, each knowing in turn that the solution lies afar.

It seems clear that, since religion is life, the key to the whole question of religious education must lie somewhere in the sphere of personality. Only religious persons can impart religious life. The word must be made flesh. Religion is vague in terms of ideas; it becomes clear and concrete only as it is lived by a religious person. The personality of the teacher then is the supreme thing in religious education. Every teacher who has the religious spirit is an incarnation of religion to his pupils; so is every father and mother, every friend and pastor. All familiar things they touch, all common words they speak become signs and forms of a diviner world. The great means of bringing men to a sense of the realities and values of the spiritual life are found in personal association with men and women who are trying to live that life. The supreme factor in religious education must ever be found in the unconscious influence of a quickening and ennobling personality. That given, the rest will follow, in so far as it can follow, for education even in the sphere of religion has its limitations in hereditary tendencies and individual will.

This principle of the influence of personality holds true in the three great and mutual agencies that serve the interests of religious education, the home, the school and the church; but of none does it hold more true than of the school.

If in the public schools we have teachers who are religious, reverent in spirit, living in harmony with God's laws, men and women to whom the world is a revelation of God's truth, and history the unfolding of his purpose, and society the opportunity of coöperating with God, then their actual religious influence will be tremendous even though they do not impart any conscious formal religious instruction. If a teacher has the spirit of religion in his own life he cannot help but inspire and awaken a religious spirit in his pupils. If a teacher is possessed by the spirit of reverence he cannot fail to inspire

others with a sense of this wonderful world as God's world; he cannot fail to shed the glow of the eternal upon every valuable human thing. Our public schools are not godless, and will not be, so long as we have in them so vast a majority of teachers who live the religious life. Our public schools will be homes of idealism so long as we have teachers who are consecrated to high ideals. In tone, temper and trend the public school system of America is religious, just because of the superior religious personality of the average public school teacher. By the law of imitation and sound suggestion, by the subtle power and charm of the unconscious influence of life touching life, the spirit of religion is being transmitted from teacher to pupil. This element of personalism which trusts largely the uplifting influence and saving power of personality is an important factor in the selection of teachers. School boards and superintendents are demanding high religious ideals of their candidates because they believe that through Christian teachers the unconscious influence of the public school will be religious even on those whom religion meets in no other way.

In the college likewise religious education is a matter depending fundamentally upon the personality of the teaching corps. To have a number of men of positive moral and spiritual worth in a faculty, men who go about their own affairs with good heart and friendly spirit, men who allow their normal Christian life and usual nature to have whatever genuine, unsolicited effect it may—this is the best spiritual asset of any educational institution. Professor Starbuck sent out a few years ago a list of questions to a large number of college graduates for the purpose of getting information in regard to the religious life of colleges. The highest consensus of judgment was that the whole religious influence of a college was largely dependent on the intimate, helpful, personal relationships between teachers and students. Spiritualized personality was generally conceded to be the only force which could beget spirituality. Men who are as near independent in

thought as possible, who are absolutely frank in helping a student to a readjustment of the faith of his childhood with the new facts and truths which have to be assimilated for the constructive faith of manhood; men who will not spiritually coddle students, but in candor and honesty endeavor to build up in them a faith that is strong for righteousness; men who are broad-minded and warm-hearted, with a sense of humor and a spirit of good cheer; men who themselves have struggled for their faith and have learned how to face life's problems—such men, no matter in what department they may teach will tend to develop in young minds and hearts a strong religious personality.

Teachers of positive Christian character cannot fail to give moral and spiritual stimulus to a school. They create standards of Christian living which permeate every phase of student life. From them worthy living is caught as by a contagion. This influence of personality is inevitable, inherent, unescapable. *But it dare not be obtrusive. It must have a fine sense of reverence for the personality of the student.* Youth abhors posing and pretense. Youth looks with suspicion upon a model or a mentor. For this reason it seems to me to be hardly advisable to have in an educational institution—especially in a small college—one specific man whose conscious purpose and recognized mission is to make men good, by inference having the other members of the teaching corps looked upon as existing simply for the purpose of making men wise. One point of vantage in the denominational college lies right here. It does not ignore religious life altogether or hand it over to a special secretary of religious affairs. If a church school remains true to its origin and purpose, if it has any reason for existence at all as a church school, it will see to it that it is led and taught by men not only of the highest intellectuality and of the best teaching ability, but by men who are willing to serve not for filthy lucre but for Christ and the Church in the institutions of the Church. Such men will unconsciously impress Christian ideals because they are striving to realize

them in their own life. In spite of occasional lapses and frequent thoughtless criticism the fact remains that the moral and spiritual life of our smaller colleges is being kept on a comparatively high level largely by the influence and personal touch of faithful leaders who in simplicity and excellence are doing a man's work in a quiet, manly way in the world which the Son of Man has in a similar manner ennobled by his divine presence.

When we come to the state universities the problem becomes more complex. The fact that there are over sixty thousand students in state institutions of education makes the problem one of the greatest importance. The hopeful feature of the whole situation is that in spite of the fact that teachers are chosen without regard to qualities of spiritual leadership, the large majority of them are Christian men. But the very fact that the state school as such pretends to take the impossible attitude of being strictly neutral in respect to the great problems of life and destiny tends to create the impression that religion is unimportant. This neutralizes a great deal of the influence for spiritual ideals which men of positive religious convictions in a staff of instruction might have. The severest criticism of the non-committal attitude of our state schools comes from these men themselves. "The real danger to religion in the state universities," said Dr. Kelsey, of the University of Michigan, before the Religious Educational Association, "lies in a tendency to atrophy of the spiritual nature. Minds become so absorbed in the details of a particular field of knowledge, that the things of the spirit are lost sight of. In their devotion to lines of study that do not bring them into contact with vital religion, even students of religious habits of thought tend to lose their perspective, drift into indifference, and finally assume an attitude hopelessly negative towards religious matters." We have developed in quite recent times a very interesting and anomalous situation in our state universities. On the one hand the public is given to understand that religion is to have no official recognition in them what-

ever. On the other hand there are no educational institutions in the land to-day that are more anxious to convince the public of the religious opportunities afforded in a non-official way to the students than are our state schools. Since they cannot in the nature of the case establish a distinctively Christian community life by making the school itself a religious community, they do the next best thing by making it a community of some sort or other with a religious appendage. Religion is not infused into the very spirit of the place from within. It is an effort from without.

One of the most promising of these ab-extra efforts to remedy what is recognized as a defect in our state schools is the Ann Arbor school of religion—a recent combination of the religious forces working among the students of the largest of the state universities, that of Michigan. This school, under the leadership of Dr. Wenley, of the department of philosophy, has no official connection whatever with the university. It is perhaps the most successful experiment that has been made in the line of voluntary religious effort in state schools. After this Ann Arbor school of religion had been organized two years, more than thirty undergraduates had determined to devote themselves to the foreign mission field.

Other state colleges are encouraging the system of student pastors for colleges. The functionary known as student pastor is not quite the same as the college pastor of some of our eastern schools, for he is nearer the student age. Neither is he so remote as the town pastor who has the spiritual welfare of the non-college element to look after. The student pastor lives in or near the campus. He is supported by some denomination, and has the special responsibility for the students of the denomination which supports him. Of course he is supposed also to assume responsibility for other students who may accept him as friend, guide and counselor. He has the approval of the university authorities and may occasionally lecture on religious matters. He does not preach however. He is frequently a man who is versed in the philosophic and scientific thought

of the time so that he may help students over the period of spiritual unrest and philosophic doubt. The University of Michigan has seven student pastors in addition to the school of religion; the University of Wisconsin has at least four; and the University of Kansas has two.

Another agency has been the work of the Christian Associations at the state universities. Their influence has been wholesome. Frequently, however, they have cultivated a morbid spirituality, and have formed a religious set or clique, which has failed to attract the student body because the large and human aspect of religion was lost sight of. According to Dr. Kelsey the Christian Associations have not been able adequately to cope with the religious situation in the larger state universities for two reasons: "first, because of an imperfect adjustment of their work with the work of the religious denominations, and secondly, for the reason that, while they have stationed in the state universities as their representatives a type of men that are high-minded, efficient in organization, conscientious and alert, they have not attempted to place there men with either the special qualifications or the vigor of personality required to make them effective in a large way as spiritual leaders."

The Christian churches have felt themselves incumbent in recent years to surround state schools with church buildings for the accommodation of students belonging to the different denominations. Often these local churches have congregations of their own but are specially equipped and enlarged for the accommodation of students. The trouble is however that a minister in a university town frequently finds considerable difficulty in looking after several hundred students in addition to his regular and permanent membership. It is right here that the student pastors, referred to above, can be of great help. The Presbyterian Board of Education recently adopted the following resolution in regard to its work at state schools: "*Resolved*, that the Board, while recognizing the need of pursuing different policies based upon local conditions at each

university center, affirms its unalterable conviction that the personal work of the university pastor with the individual students is fundamental in this work, and that this pastoral care of students, leading up to contact with the local church, is absolutely necessary to the success of the movement and the spiritual welfare of the student body." On the strength of this conviction the Presbyterian Church has established eight of these university pastors during the last two years. It is rather significant that one of the leaders of a large state school in a recent speech said: "The cry of the state universities to the churches is: Send us men! Men who will say to the students of their own churches without exclusion of others: 'Come let us reason together on spiritual things.'"

Our main contention up to this point has been that religious character is the resultant largely of contact with strong religious personal leaders as teachers. Since then religious character is a thing that is caught rather than taught, does it follow that there is to be no room for religious instruction in our schools and colleges? Because formal religious instruction is only one phase of religious education is it to be ignored by our schools entirely? This question has presented the greatest difficulty. The most varied opinions are still being held in regard to it. Europe and America furnish four types of schools exemplifying the different possibilities of solving the question of formal religious instruction. First are the schools having no specific religious instruction at all. This is the case in the state schools of France, in most of the public schools of the United States as well as in some private schools. Then there are schools in which undenominational religious instruction has been made a feature and moral instruction associated with it. This method is aimed at in the English elementary schools and in some American colleges. If parents wish to do so they may withdraw their children from the periods devoted to religious instruction. Then there are schools in which religious as well as partially denominational instruction is given under the control of the denominations of the locality. This

system is found in Germany and Switzerland. Finally there are schools in which religious instruction according to one faith is given and moral instruction is made dependent thereon. This system is found in parochial schools, and in countries where are found state-schools of one faith as the Roman Catholic or the Lutheran.

The situation in the American public school presents a perplexing dilemma. On the one hand we have the doctrine of the separation of church and state. We are told that the men who framed the constitution showed consummate wisdom in laying down this policy. We are assured that this doctrine holds the secret of our civil and religious liberty. On the other hand we have a whole nation, a vast majority of whose people are professedly religious, supporting an educational system from which the teaching of religion is excluded, yet believing that religion is necessary to the welfare of the nation. Personally we feel that the total exclusion of all reference to religion in the public schools is certainly not warranted by the American policy of the separation of church and state. The history of our country does not warrant so narrow an interpretation of our national policy. The Ordinance of 1787, which created the great Northwest Territory, has the famous passage, "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged." The whole secularist theory of the state is un-American. Has not religion been intertwined with our national affairs from the Fast Day and Thanksgiving Proclamation of the Continental Congress and the orders of Washington down to our own day? Does not the nation provide for the religious instruction of soldiers and sailors of the army? Do not Congress and the state legislatures invite ministers of religion to open their sessions by invoking the blessing of God? Does not every witness and juryman in court take an oath in the presence of Almighty God, the Searcher of all hearts? Did not General Grant invite the churches of America to coöperate with the

government in the civilization and christianization of the Indian tribes? The American people do believe in the separation of church and state, but at the same time they repudiate the idea that the Kingdom of God is the monopoly of the church and that all the rest of human life lies outside the sphere of religion and is secular or profane.

Great confusion has resulted from the attempt of men to be true to the policy of the separation of church and state, and at the same time to be true to their deeper convictions that the most important educational force of the nation ought not to take a purely negative attitude toward that which has the highest value for life, viz., religion. The spirit of modern idealism is reopening the whole question. The spirit of modern pedagogy which sees that the child is one and indivisible, that the whole child is in the school forming his attitude toward life and destiny, is raising its voice of protest against cutting the Gordian knot by the easy way of farming the religious nature of the child over to the church. This easy way of dividing the child into a secular and a sacred half raises more questions than it solves. To be thoroughly consistent in the attempt to make the state neutral in religion it would be necessary to keep teachers with religious ideals out of the school-room altogether. Why say to our teachers: "Every tree in the garden of knowledge you may touch, but not this tree of life?"

How about the rights of private conscience? Will not every attempt at religious instruction lead to sectarianism with all its attendant evils? To the first question we answer that a nation simply because it is free has no right to be debarred from taking necessary measures to insure its own stability and permanence. We are not satisfied with the naturalistic theory of ethics with all its shifting standards. We believe that the religious sanction is still the background of high moral endeavor in men and nations, that moral codes are effective only as they inspire in men emotions of reverence. For this reason it is incumbent on a nation for the sake of its own moral life, which means its permanence and stability, to see to it that its

children receive at least elementary instruction in the fundamental principles of religion. To the second question we answer that the religious forces of twentieth century America are more unified than ever before. Slowly but surely under the influence of the new idealism non-essentials are being lost sight of and the few fundamental principles of life and destiny are rising above the spirit of contention. Surely truths like belief in God, the brotherhood of man, the value of life, the moral order of the universe are universal enough to be taught without giving reasonable offense to any one. There is a possibility of teaching religion upon the ideals of our people as a whole without making it sectarian. It has been done, it is being done to-day. The twentieth century spirit of America in its attempt at reconciliation will not rest until it finds a way of conserving not only the unity of the child and the unity of education, but of linking the school to the whole of life and of making it in every way representative of the highest ideals of our people.

For the present, confusion still reigns. It seems to be centered about the question of the Bible in the school, whether it is to be admitted at all, how it is to be read, devotionally or academically. The law in the several states varies considerably. In New York the law gives no authority to use any portion of the school hours for religious instruction. In some places in the state religious services of any kind are forbidden. At times the Bible is read, but if some one objects the law is immediately enforced. Massachusetts requires some portion of the Bible to be read daily in the public schools. In Missouri the trustees compel Bible reading. In Illinois a student may be expelled for studying during the reading of the Bible. In Georgia the Bible must be read in the schools. Iowa leaves the matter entirely to the judgment of the teacher and permits no dictation by either parents or trustees—a very sensible law. In Arkansas the trustees decide the question. In the Dakotas the Bible may not be excluded from any public school and at the option of the teacher may be read daily for

a period not exceeding ten minutes. Rhode Island recommends the rejection of any teacher who is in the habit of scoffing at religion. The state of Washington prohibits the reading of the Bible in the schools. Arizona takes the certificate from any teacher who conducts religious services of any kind in school. Wisconsin has a peculiar legal decision. In 1890 a matter of great interest came before the Supreme Court of Wisconsin in the case of the State *ex rel.* Weiss and others *vs.* The District Board of School District No. 6 of the City of Edgerton. In this case the question was whether or not the reading of the Bible in King James's Version in public schools was sectarian instruction. In an elaborate opinion the Court held that the reading from the Bible in the schools, although unaccompanied by any comment on the part of the teacher, is "instruction"; that since the Bible contains numerous doctrinal passages, upon some of which the creed of certain sects is based, the reading of the Bible is also "sectarian instruction"; that therefore the use of the Bible as a text-book in the public schools and the stated reading thereof has a tendency to inculcate sectarian ideas and falls within the prohibition of the Constitution of the State. So likewise in 1869 the Cincinnati school board was upheld in forbidding the reading of the Bible, the same action was taken in Chicago in 1875, and in New Haven in 1878. New Hampshire requires that "the morning exercises of all the schools shall commence with the reading of the Scriptures, followed by the Lord's Prayer." The Bible is not read in any of the schools of Utah. New Jersey has the law that no religious service or exercise except the reading of the Bible and the repeating of the Lord's Prayer shall be held in any public school. Oklahoma rules that "the Bible shall not be excluded from the public schools." The Supreme Court of Texas ruled in 1908 that "to hold that the offering of prayers, either by the repetition of the Lord's Prayer or otherwise, the singing of songs, whether devotional or not, and the reading of the Bible make the place where such is done a place of worship, within the meaning of the Constitution,

would produce intolerable results." Pennsylvania says, "the Scriptures come under the head of text-books and they should not be omitted from the list." In consequence the Bible was read in 9,200 schools in Pennsylvania cities and in 18,821 rural schools in the year 1910. The bill recently agitated making the Bible reading obligatory in the public schools of Pennsylvania was defeated in the state senate, probably because a clause was attached to it making the failure to read ten verses daily sufficient ground for the expulsion of a teacher. The ten-verse condition had a tendency to make the bill ridiculous.

All these different opinions and decisions assure us that this is not a purely academic question, but rather one that is very much alive. So far as we can see, the solution lies afar. Certainly those who would exclude the Bible from the schools entirely are not consistent. The most consistent of these opponents is the Kansas freethinker, who claims to have discovered through physical science and biological laws that there is no real God, that man has no soul, and that life ends forever at death; and in consequence of these marvellous discoveries he has introduced into the Kansas legislature a bill, the first section of which reads: "That it shall be unlawful for any text-book commission, board of education, superintendent of instruction, teacher or other school authorities to adopt any book to be used as a text-book, song book or classic in any educational institution of Kansas, that is supported wholly or in part by public taxation, containing any article teaching the existence of gods, devils, souls, spirits, ghosts, angels, heaven, hell and the resurrection of the dead as facts in nature, etc." Away then with Browning! What school boy would dare to commit,

"Call this God, then, call that—soul, and both,—the only facts for me.  
Prove them facts? that they o'erpass my power of proving,  
Proves them such."

To prison with the man who ventures to introduce Emerson's lines on the death of his child into a text-book,

"What is excellent  
As God lives is permanent;  
Hearts are dust, hearts love remain,  
Hearts love will meet again,  
House and tenant go to ground,  
Lost in God, in Godhead found."

What shall we say of Shakespeare and Milton, of Goethe and Schiller, of Cowper and Burns, of Wordsworth and Tennyson? By what right do we include these and exclude the Psalms and the Prophets? Banish history and literature and the arts, exclude Washington's inaugural and his farewell address, Lincoln's Gettysburg speech—all in the name of consistency. Surely consistency at this price is intolerable.

On the other hand we appreciate the difficulty in introducing the Bible into the schools in a legal way. Here, too, it is hard to be consistent. All stand equal before the law—the Protestant, the Catholic, the Mohammedan and Jew, the Mormon, the freethinker and the atheist. Whatever may be the view of the majority the question arises, has the state the right to enforce the view of the majority upon the minority, however small? Is it not precisely for the protection of the minority that constitutional limitations exist? Majorities need no protection; they can take care of themselves. It is a delicate question, indeed, and requires compromise in either case.

Perhaps under present conditions, the best temporary solution is, not to insist by legal enactment upon the use of the Bible academically in public schools, but the permission and encouragement to use it devotionally, leaving the matter entirely to the judgment of the teacher without dictation by either parents or trustees. Here again the whole matter resolves itself into a question of religious personality and good sense on the part of the one who alone can solve the problem, the teacher. Professor Huxley's famous letter to the rector of *St. Mary's Church in Bryanstone Square, London*, sums up the whole situation better than any other document of which we know. "I hold," wrote he, "that any system of education which attempts to deal only with the intellectual side of a

child's nature, and leaves the rest untouched, will prove a delusion and a snare, just as likely to produce a crop of unusually astute scoundrels as anything else. In my belief, unless a child be taught not only morality, but religion, education will come to very little. I believe, further, that in the present chaotic state of men's thoughts on these subjects, the only practical method of not altogether excluding religion from the education of the masses is to let them read the Bible, and permit the many noble thoughts and deeds mirrored there to sink into their hearts." This, however true, does not justify us in adopting legal enactments making the reading of the Bible compulsory, or in passing laws prohibiting the reading of Scripture entirely in the public schools. After all, the first thing is not a law but a religious spirit that recognizes a sense of the eternal in things temporal. Out of that spirit there will grow the voluntary use of the Bible as a book of devotion, at least in the opening services of our public schools. Just because it is voluntary, growing spontaneously out of the life of the teacher, it will be all the more effective in the nourishment and quickening of the religious life of the pupil.

When we come to religious instruction in the college we approach a different aspect of the question. The entire history of the American college must be taken into consideration. The whole college idea has its genesis in religion. The universities of northern Europe, which are the real prototypes of the American college, were the outgrowth of Christianity. It was the religion of Christ that turned men from the quest of pleasure and the love of plunder, to the pursuit of the higher ideals of education and contemplation. The American college itself began as an institution of religion. It began really for the training of ministers in order that the work of the church might be more intelligently conducted. In the three centuries of American history nearly all denominations of the church have founded their colleges, many of which are still supported and controlled by the church. They were established for the purpose of giving a liberal education from a

Christian point of view. They were established by Christian men and built upon Christian foundations. At first the teaching of religion as a distinct subject entered largely into the curriculum. Every college had its course on evidences of Christianity. In more recent times, however, men have begun to see that a Christian college is not to be judged by the amount of religion that it teaches in definite courses, but rather by the fact that religion underlies, unifies and is the postulate of all its instruction. Religion is found in the college as a presupposition rather than as an irritating self-assertion. There came a time, however, in at least certain American colleges, when even the presupposition was lost sight of, and all reference to religion was practically excluded. The ignorance of college students in Biblical lore became proverbial. The story of the young collegian who replied to the question what Shakespeare meant by the phrase, "the penalty of Adam," that it "referred to the mark set on Adam for killing his brother" was passed on from mouth to mouth. It was felt that college men were not only hopelessly ignorant but painfully careless about religious matters. It was felt that the appreciation of the wealth and the benignity of the spiritual was not what it should be among college men. It was felt that it would be sad indeed if the institutions founded by our fathers as training schools for the Christian life would neglect to give men a consciousness of the solid substratum of the religious reality in life. The result was a reaction toward a certain amount of definite religious instruction which is to-day making itself felt in many of the colleges of the land. This reaction does not attempt to carry on any scheme of enforced religious instruction based upon an accepted type of thought or church life. It is more tactful than that. It recognizes present conditions and adapts itself to the new age. It makes a serious attempt to adapt itself to the peculiarities and needs of undergraduate life. It recognizes the fact that the average young collegian is unconventional in his religious experience, that he dreads seeming to appear better than he is and in consequence

often appears worse than he is, that he hates sham and loves reality, that at heart he is sincere and idealistic, that the religious knowledge which he brings with him to college from home and church is meager enough. With this in mind many of the colleges have within recent years made the study of the English Bible a part of the curriculum, believing that a knowledge of the historical facts, literary forms, modes of thought, moral and religious teachings of the Old and New Testament were essential elements of that true culture, which in a complete man ought to culminate in religion. In some colleges Biblical instruction is made a part of the earlier years of undergraduate life. In the upper classes, optional courses are offered showing how the problems of literature and philosophy bear upon the Bible and Christianity.

In addition to more or less formal religious instruction it is possible, without doing violence to the subject in hand, for a wise teacher to impart a great deal of incidental religious inspiration. We can easily see the vital relation which the chair of philosophy sustains to Christianity, in the way of responsibility on the part of a teacher to become at once the "guide, philosopher and friend," to a young man who is becoming freshly oriented in religious belief. So in the study of history. It is simply impossible to treat the history of institutions without reference to Christianity, and its place in the world.

One of the most interesting experiments in direct religious instruction in a college is that made by President Hyde of Bowdoin College. For a number of years he has been giving an annual course of twenty lectures, followed by informal discussion, on the essentials of religion. Students representing every form of religious opinion attended his class-room and at the end of the semester wrote a thesis covering the twenty topics, expressing their own views. He has done this for twenty years without objection on the part of his students or patrons. The syllabus of twenty topics covering the vital truths of religion treated by Dr. Hyde are as follows: (1) The

facts of the world, and the possible principles of their interpretation. (2) The conception of God. (3) The historic representations of God. (4) The presence of God in humanity. (5) The literary expression of religion. (6) The institutional embodiment of religion. (7) Religious aspiration and depression. (8) Justification by aspiration. (9) The answer to prayer. (10) The authority of duty. (11) The inevitableness of sacrifice. (12) The nature of sin. (13) The opportunity of repentance. (14) The assurance of forgiveness. (15) Rewards and penalties. (16) The future of the world and the hope of immortality. (17) Love as the universal solvent of social problems. (18) Evangelism. (19) The mission and the settlement. (20) Religious education. The result has been as he himself says, "more reverence for their common Heavenly Father, more respect for each other, more loyalty to the Spirit of Christ, more readiness to live pure lives and do good work in the world."

All through our colleges to-day there is to be found a religious interest that is significant. We are waking to a sense of responsibility for the religious life of the student. We are beginning to feel that his religion is our business. Everywhere we see the establishment of chairs for Biblical literature, the formation of Bible departments, great conventions of college men, social work by students. Men are feeling that college life must not degenerate into a period of indolent enjoyment. Neither does it exist for the purpose of creating a new type of Hellenism that is to end in the pagan rehabilitation of the flesh. College men are to be trained for leadership. This can not be done without the recognition of the fact that religion is the dynamic to be applied to the duty that lies nearest and the ideal that rises clearest. There can be no permanent leadership in things worth leading on the part of college men unless college men are trained above all things to a sense of exaltation in the things of the Spirit, to a faith in the eternal significance of life and of the world, to a reverence for the sacredness of the individual person, and to a sense of simple

trust in God. Eucken is certainly right in his claim that any theory of personality is insufficient which is not religiously based. This thought is strong in the minds of leaders of education to-day. The dominant note in at least two of the great inaugural addresses of university presidents delivered quite recently was the necessity for the cultivation in the higher schools of America of that essential religion which exalts the things of the human spirit over things physical and which reads back of the material world a purpose and a destiny. It is easy, of course, to caricature and to criticize this tendency and to make light of the visions which are seen and of the dreams which are dreamt by the new idealism of the age. But the truth still remains that religion lifted above its accidents to its essential significance is bound to continue to be the inspiration of the highest educational ideals of our day.

LANCASTER, PA.

### EDITORIAL NOTICE.

This issue of the REFORMED CHURCH REVIEW is devoted exclusively to the Heidelberg Catechism, whose 350th anniversary is being observed this year by the Reformed Church in the U. S. of America. It contains articles that discuss the Heidelberg Catechism itself, in its various aspects as a confessional symbol and as a catechetical manual, and others that treat of the larger question of Religious Education as it confronts us in home, church, and school.

The purpose of the editors in planning this special number was neither eulogy nor criticism, but history. They believe that this purpose has been achieved in the appreciative, as well as in the critical articles in the foregoing pages. Both are historical symptoms. And jointly they represent the present day attitude towards the Heidelberg Catechism.